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AN

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON,

FROM

ITS FORMATION TO THE PRESENT PERIOD.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

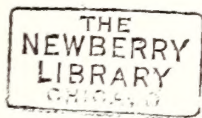
TWO SERMONS,

ONE ON LEAVING THE OLD, AND THE OTHER ON ENTERING  
THE NEW HOUSE OF WORSHIP.

BY THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM EMERSON, A. M. A. A. S. & S. H. S.

THE TWELFTH PASTOR OF SAID CHURCH.



BOSTON,

PUBLISHED BY MUNROE & FRANCIS,

NO. 4, CORNHILL.

1812.





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Emerson, William, 1769-1811.

An historical sketch of the First church in Boston, from its formation to the present period. To which are added two sermons, one on leaving the old, and the other on entering the new house of worship. By the late Rev. William Emerson ... Boston, Munroe & Francis, 1812.

2 p. l., (9)-256 p. 23½ x 14<sup>cm</sup>.

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1. Boston. First church.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT ;

District Clerk's Office.

BE it remembered, That, on the twenty-sixth day of December, A. D. 1811, and in the thirty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, RUTH EMERSON, of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof she claims, as proprietor, in the words following, to wit ;

"An HISTORICAL SKETCH of the FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON, from its formation to the present period. To which are added Two Sermons, one on leaving the old, and the other on entering the new house of worship. By the late Rev. WILLIAM EMERSON, A.M. A.A.S. & S.H.S. the twelfth pastor of said church."

In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned ;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned ; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

WILLIAM S. SHAW,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.





## ADVERTISEMENT OF THE EDITORS.

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THE following work is published, without material alterations, as it was left by the author.

It is to be regretted, that he did not live to complete his design.

To what was prepared respecting Dr. Chauncy is added a sketch of his family by Dr. Clarke.\*

As several of the author's late society have earnestly requested, that this history should contain some records of their two last beloved pastors, accounts of them have been added from documents, which have been already published.

The notice of Dr. Clarke is from the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. vi. p. 3. consisting of a "Sketch of the life and character of Rev. Dr. Clarke," supposed to be written by Rev. Dr. Belknap ; and an extract from President Willard's discourse, delivered at First Church, the sunday after the decease of Dr. Clarke.

The account of Mr. Emerson is extracted from the discourse, delivered at his funeral by Rev. Joseph S. Buckminster, minister of Brattle-street church.

To the whole are added, agreeably to the original design of the author, two sermons ; one preached, on leaving the old house of worship in Cornhill ; the other, at the dedication of the new meeting-house in Chauncy-place.

25 Dec. 1811.

\* Published in an appendix to his sermon on the death of Dr. Chauncy.



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AN  
HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF THE  
**FIRST CHURCH.**

---

**SECTION I.**

From the formation of the Church, 1630, to the settlement of  
Mr. Cotton, 1633.

THE four men particularly eminent and active in SECT. I.  
laying the foundation of the First Church in 1630.  
Boston were John Winthrop, Isaac Johnson,  
Thomas Dudley, and John Wilson.

The first of these illustrious characters was the  
first governour of Massachusetts.

The second was a gentleman of family and  
fortune, who, with his honourable lady, was swept  
away by the ravages of a mortal disease in the  
infancy of the settlement.

Mr. Dudley was a long time deputy-governour,  
and afterwards governour of the colony.

Mr. Wilson was a minister of religion, abound-  
ing in zeal, prudence, and charity.



SECT. I.

1630.

Such were the leaders in the honourable enterprise of founding a religious colony. With others of similar religious and political opinions, they had for some time belonged to an association in London, called "The governour and company of Massachusetts Bay." On leaving England, they brought with them the patent, or charter, of the plantation. The members of this company were distinguished, among the settlers of the American wilderness, for piety, wealth, talents, and liberality. In principle indeed they were puritans; but they never seceded from the episcopal church, until they left their country.

17 June.

The Arabella, the vessel, in which they crossed the Atlantick, anchored in Massachusetts Bay, on the 17 June, 1630. After exploring Mystick river, they came ashore at Charlestown, on the first of July, with a view to a permanent residence.

8 July.

8 July, a thanksgiving was observed in the several plantations, and on the 23 August, the first court of assistants was holden on board the Arabella.

23 Aug.

The first question agitated was, How shall the ministers be maintained? It was agreed, that Mr. Phillips, minister of the Watertown plantation, should have 30*l.* a year, and Mr. Wilson 20*l.*, until his wife, whom he had left in England, should come over, when he was to have the same. Sir R. Saltonstall undertook to see, that the agreement should be fulfilled in regard to





Mr. Phillips, and governour Winthrop assumed the same care for the salary of Mr. Wilson. SECT. I.  
1630.

As soon, as a few civil arrangements had been made, it was determined, that a church should be regularly imbodyed.

On the 27 August therefore a fast was appointed, a covenant formed and subscribed, Mr. Wilson was chosen teacher, Mr. Nowell an elder, and Mr. Gager and Mr. Aspinwall deacons. These gentlemen were severally confirmed in office by the imposition of hands and by prayer. It was however universally understood, that the ceremony, as it respected Mr. Wilson, did not imply a renunciation of the ministry, which he received in England. 27 Aug.

The following is the form of covenant, which was subscribed by the members.

*"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in obedience to his holy will and divine ordinance,*

*"We, whose names are here underwritten, being by his most wise and good providence brought together into this part of America, in the Bay of Massachusetts, and desirous to unite into one congregation or church, under the Lord Jesus Christ, our head, in such sort, as becometh all those, whom he hath redeemed, and sanctified to himself, do hereby solemnly and religiously, as in his most holy presence, promise and bind ourselves to walk in all our ways according to the rule of the gospel, and in all sincere conformity to his holy ordinances, and in mutual love and*



SECT. I. respect to each other so near, as God shall give  
 1630. us grace."

Probably sixty-four men and half as many women immediately signed this religious obligation.

The first meeting-place of the congregation was in the umbrage of a large tree. Whether they had better accommodations, during their continuance at Charlestown, and of how many weeks or months exactly that continuance was, it is perhaps impossible to say. It is certain, that the settlers had scarcely rested, before they perceived, that the south side of the Charles was preferable to the north, both for commerce and situation. Of course they began to remove to the peninsula. At first those, who had thus removed, went back to worship at Charlestown on the Lord's days. In a little time, publick worship was celebrated alternately on each side of the river. At length the First Church took its station altogether in Trimontane, which was soon called Boston, after a place of the same name in Lincolnshire, England, where some of the emigrants were born, and whence they expected Mr. Cotton, a congregational minister of superlative worth.

Early in 1631, Mr. Wilson made a visit to England. On the morning of the 29 March, he had an affectionate meeting, at the governour's, with a number of the brethren, where he commended them in prayer to God, and exhorted them to steadfastness in faith, purity, and brotherly love. He recommended to them the strict observance



of religious rites, during his absence ; and, as  
governour Winthrop, deputy-governour Dudley, and elder Nowell, in his opinion, were best  
qualified to lead the devotions and supply the instructions of the congregation, so he in a manner consecrated them to the temporary execution of pastoral duties. He sailed from Salem, 1 April, and arrived in London, the 29th of the same month. But his place was soon after supplied by Rev. Mr. Eliot.

SECT. I.

1631

Although the founders of Massachusetts and of our church forsook their native country with the express design of enjoying perfect liberty of conscience ; and, although doubtless it was the original intention to preserve ecclesiastical affairs distinct from those of the state, yet these interests became immediately blended.

The church at Salem had called Mr. Roger Williams to the office of teacher. It had been said of this man, that he refused communion with the church in Boston, because its members would not make a publick declaration of their repentance for having continued their connexion with the episcopal church, whilst they remained in England. He had also taught, that the magistrate ought not to punish breaches of the sabbath, nor any offence against those laws of God, which relate solely to his worship. Alarmed at this degree of liberality, the magistrates immediately signified to Mr. Endicott their dissatisfaction with the proceedings of the Salem church ; and even notified to Mr. Williams himself their pleasure,





SECT. I. that he would not suffer the union to be consum-  
1631. mated, until their permission should be known.

In the exercise of the same power, derived partly from their civil capacity, and partly from their standing in the church, the governour, deputy-governour, and elder went to Watertown to inquire into an opinion maintained in that church, that the church of Rome was right. After the matter was debated before numbers of both congregations, the opinion of the Watertown elder, whose name was Brown, with the general approbation, was condemned as erroneous.

The difficulty did not here terminate. Elder Brown persisted in his error. The Court was applied to, interfered, and wrote to the First Church to consider the propriety of his continuance in office. The Church answered, that if the Court would prove the allegations, she would silence the offender. At length, Messieurs Winthrop, Dudley, and Nowell repaired to Watertown, where the congregation was divided on the subject in question. The governour said, "We have come to you, as peacemakers. You may choose, whether we shall enter upon the investigation of the controversy in the character of magistrates, as members of a neighbouring congregation, or as referees, not satisfied with the notice, you have taken of our previous advice." Mr. Phillips, the pastor, desired them to act as members of a neighbouring congregation only. On this condition a hearing was had, in which both



parties complained, relented, and promised the adoption of conciliatory measures.

SECT. I.

1632.

26 May.

The affairs of the church as well, as of the plantation, were prosperous ; though occasions were not wanting of debate among individuals and in the community. Instances of political interferences with ecclesiastical concerns were often taking place. No church could be gathered without permission from the magistrates ; and none could be a magistrate, nor even vote for a magistrate, unless he was member of a church thus politically gathered. In this politico-religious condition, questions would frequently arise respecting the nature, qualifications, and power of various offices. They were at a loss, for example, whether the same person, at the same time, might be a civil magistrate and a ruling elder. If not, which should he lay down, what should be done ? Might there be divers pastors in the same church ? These questions the church proposed to the consideration of her sister churches in Plymouth and in Salem.

The first question was answered unanimously in the negative ; and thenceforth Mr. Nowell relinquished his office in the church, and devoted himself entirely to the duties of a civilian.

The second received a doubtful answer ; because the answer to the first involved an experiment, the results of which were not known.

To the third was given the same kind of reply ; because the respondents did not wish to deprive the church of any means of improvement she



SECT. I. could fairly enjoy ; and, at the same time, they  
1632. were not ignorant of the rivalry and feuds, which  
are the natural, though not unavoidable, consequence of placing two or more persons with equal powers in the same office.

On the return of Mr. Wilson from London, which was on the 26 May, 1632, the congregation began to build a house for publick worship, and another for the pastor. Towards these purposes they made a voluntary contribution of 120/. They erected the church on the south side of State-Street, not far from the spot, on which the Exchange has been newly reared. Its roof was thatched, and its walls were of mud.

As the season grew late, and the weather severe, those members of the congregation, who belonged to Charlestown, found it troublesome to worship in Boston. Accordingly they signified their desire to constitute a new society on the north side of the river. The 11 October was set apart for seeking direction of God ; and, on the 14th, thirty-three persons were peaceably dismissed from their relation to the church. They then elected Mr. James their teacher, and formed what is now the congregational church in Charlestown.\*

The congregation now fixed their eyes, for a teacher, on Mr. John Eliot, who had arrived the

\* " And now upon this separation I find the number of males in the church of Boston (after nigh two years continuance here, in which time doubtless additions were made to it,) amounted but to about 70 or 80, the body of the inhabitants." [Foxcroft's Cent. Sermon.]



preceding year, and had officiated, for the most part, during Mr. Wilson's absence, and who afterwards immortalized his name by his apostleship among the Indians. But he had already determined on a settlement at Roxbury, and would not be persuaded to alter his resolution.

SECT. I.

1632.

The 22 November was solemnized, as a fast, on which Mr. Wilson, hitherto the teacher, was ordained the pastor of the church. At the same time were elected Mr. Oliver a ruling elder, and two deacons, on all of whom hands were imposed, as a sign of consecration.

One hundred and thirty men, and ninety women had now become members of the church. But, besides the loss of the Charlestown members, several had died, several others had removed to Salem, and a few had returned to England. Probably the church did not now number more, than a hundred communicants. Four children were baptized in the first year, eleven in the second, three in the third, and four in that part of the fourth, which elapsed before Mr. Cotton's ordination. Of these twenty-two there were eleven of each sex.

1633.

6 Aug.





## SECTION II.

From the settlement of Mr. Cotton, 1634, to his death, 1652.

SECT. II. ON 4 September, 1633, arrived from England, with Mr. Hooker, and many other emigrants of distinction, Rev. John Cotton. His celebrity, which was great in England, had already filled the American settlements, and prepared him a most welcome reception. His abilities were considered, as common property ; and it was the immediate concern of the wise and good, where he should fix his residence, and how obtain an honourable support.

The scene of his and his wife's admission into the church was such, as displayed the precision and sanctity of his character, and interested the feelings of every beholder. Mrs. Cotton, on their passage, had brought him a son, whom he called Seaborn, but whom he did not baptize, until he was admitted into the church at Boston. He assigned two reasons for the omission. One was, there was no settled congregation on board the ship. Secondly, he said, a minister has no power to administer the seals of the covenant, except in his own congregation. " He desired, his



wife might also be admitted a member, and gave a modest testimony of her ; but withal requested, she might not be put to make open confession, which, he said, was against the apostle's rule, and not fit for women's modesty ; but that the elders might examine her in private. So she was asked, if she did consent in the confession of faith made by her husband, and if she did desire to be admitted ; whereto she answered affirmatively, and so both were admitted, and their child baptized, the father presenting it ; the child's baptism being, as he did then affirm in another case, the father's instruction for the help of his faith."\*

It was first proposed, that Mr. Cotton should be maintained from the treasury, in consideration of the political as well, as ecclesiastical benefits, which were expected from his ministry ; but the maturer judgment of a majority of the council quashed the proposal. He might have selected any situation in the country ; and he was in fact urged to accept several invitations, other than what he received in Boston. But he was somewhat compelled by the advice of the governour and council as well, as the unanimous voice of the First Church, here to bestow his principal labours. Accordingly a fast was observed, on 17 October, when "he was solemnly ordained teacher of that church, by the imposition of the hands of the presbytery, as was Mr. Leverett, an ancient professor of religion of Mr. Cotton's con-

\* Winthrop.



SECT. II. 1633. gregation in England, ordained ruling elder of the same church, the congregation testifying their consent by lifting up their hands. Mr. Wilson, pastor of the same church, demanded of him, if he accepted of that call. He paused, and then spake to this effect, that however he knew himself unworthy and insufficient for that place, yet having observed the passages of God's providence, which he reckoned up in part, in calling him to it, he could not but accept of it. Then the pastor and the two ruling elders laying their hands upon his head, the pastor prayed, and speaking to him by his name, did thereby design him to said office in the name of the holy ghost, and did give him the charge of the congregation, and did thereby, as a sign from God, endue him, at least prayed, that he might be endued, with gifts fit for his office, and largely did bless him. Then the neighbour ministers, that were present, did, at the pastor's motion, give him the right hand of fellowship, and the pastor did make a stipulation between him and the congregation."

In answering the invitation of the church, Mr. Cotton recommended to their care a few friends, who belonged to his society in England, and who had followed him to this country. They were of course provided for.

The ministers in the neighbourhood, having become sufficiently numerous, formed an association, and met, once a fortnight, in rotation, at one another's houses. At each meeting some subject of moment was debated. Mr. Skelton and Mr.



Williams, of Salem, were offended at the rise of this institution, and predicted, that it would originate a presbytery, or superintendency, that would end in the ruin of the church's liberties. Mr. Hubbard, in his ms. indulges a bitterness of invective against these gentlemen, which the expression of their fears can hardly justify. The event however has proved, that their suspicions were groundless. What they condemned was the origin of the Boston Association of congregational ministers, who continue, every second monday, in the afternoon, to hold a meeting for prayer, theological discussion, and social intercourse. Yet perhaps there is not a place in the world, where the independence of individual churches is more perfectly enjoyed, than in this metropolis, and its vicinity. -

Immediately upon his induction, Mr. Cotton entered upon the duties of his office ; and so great was his influence both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs, that the measures, he recommended in his sermons, were forthwith adopted in the church ; and his private political counsels were with equal readiness enforced by the government. The congregation received continual accessions ; and more were here added to the number of communicants, than in all the other churches of the country. Many, who had been notoriously immoral, came and confessed their sins, and were received into the bosom of the church. Mr. Wilson was equally zealous and successful in maintaining the discipline of the church. The

SECT. II.  
1633.





SECT. II. elders, deacons, and several private brethren  
1634. were faithful coadjutors in the work of general  
edification ; so that no religious community ever  
appeared in a more prosperous condition.

There was no subject, which Mr. Cotton did not discuss ; and whatever doctrine or sentiment he delivered, he maintained by the word of God. He showed from the scriptures, that the ministry ought to be maintained from a publick chest, which was to be supplied by a weekly contribution. Mr. Cotton had expended towards his own settlement 80*l*. a reimbursement of which he refused. 60*l*. were contributed for the finishing of his house, and 100*l*. for his and Mr. Wilson's support.

The earliest notice of the 5th day or thursday lecture is given in Winthrop's journal for this year, when it seems to have been already established.

There was now some contention in the church of Charlestown ; and, among other sources of strife between Mr. James the pastor and Mr. Nowell the elder, it was questioned by the latter, whether they were in fact separated from the First Church.

The rules and discipline of the church were so rigidly observed, that a person coming from a neighbouring church, in which he was here well known to enjoy a fair character and a regular standing, could not be received, without renewing the profession of his faith in the language of his confessors.



Mr. Cotton taught, that a magistrate ought not to be deprived of his official character without just cause, and that for no cause should he be arraigned, as a publick convict.

SECT. II.

1634.

Mr. Wilson, this year, it seems, made another visit to his native country.

On every occasion, where a matter was disputed, Mr. Cotton settled the difference by his publick preaching. Mr. Hooker and his friends were about to remove to the Connecticut. Their design was strenuously seconded by some and opposed by others. After the matter had been for some time debated, Mr. Cotton ended the affair by preaching from Hag. ii. 4. showing the strength of the magistracy, ministry, and people. In their authority consisted the strength of the first, in their purity that of the second, and in their liberty that of the last. Each estate, he said, had a negative voice, and yet the ultimate power should reside in the whole body of the people.

The thursday lecture was now suspended, 4 October every other week, to give place to another lecture at Cambridge, on the alternate thursday.

Mr. Eliot blamed the magistrates for overreaching the Pequods in a peace made with them. Mr. Cotton was appointed to deal with him, and desire him to make a publick recantation ; which he did.

The thursday lecture reverted to its ancient order. It was customary for the inhabitants occasionally to transact business relative to the po-

11 Dec.



SECT. II. lice of the town, immediately after lecture. On

1634.

11 December, this year, they chose seven new selectmen, to the exclusion of very worthy gentlemen, who had served them in preceding years. But Mr. Cotton interposed and showed from scripture, that it was an order of heaven to have all such business committed to the elders. Such was the weight of his authority, that he caused, on the succeeding thursday, a new election.

1635.

13 Jan.

The church, this day, kept a fast on account of the pastor's absence in England, and the probability there was, that he and his companions would be detained and troubled.

19 Jan.

There was, on 19 January, a general meeting of the ministers, by the request of the governor and assistants, to deliberate on these two questions. First. What ought to be done, if a general governor should be sent out of England? Second. Is it lawful to carry the cross in our banners? In the first case they were agreed, that they ought not to accept him; but to defend their possession in the best manner they were able. On the second they divided, and came to no decision.

15 March.

About this time, a disturbance happened at Lynn. The pastor had been somewhat arbitrary; and some of the members, from a spirit of resentment, questioned, if they were a true church, and commenced a separation. The pastor and his adherents requested the advice of sister churches. Meanwhile, the pastor desired the



authors of the schism to commit their grievances to writing. They refused. He therefore was for excommunicating them ; and wrote to the churches to desist from their intended visit. The letter was read immediately after thursday lecture, when it seemed to be the general opinion, that the churches ought to hear both sides of the dispute. Accordingly they went upon the ground ; heard the parties ; acknowledged them a true church ; and reconciled the members.

SECT. II.

1635.

Rev. Mr. Wilson arrived here from England in company with Mr. Shepard, Mr. Jones, and others. It was probably now, that his wife accompanied him. The voyage, which Mr. W. now finished, was remarkable. He more than once narrowly escaped shipwreck. On his return from England, he was forced by foul weather upon the coast of Ireland, and, after many dangers, he visited the country. He met many persons interested in the settlement of Newengland. From Ireland he passed into Scotland, and into the north of England, and, through his whole tour, he met with persons of quality, who were concerned for the prosperity of Newengland, and who esteemed his visit among them a smile of Providence.

6 Sept.

1 Nov.

In December, 1635, Mr. Norton arrived at Plymouth.

The ministers occasionally interposed, in case of differences among magistrates ; yet rarely or never, unless expressly requested by the governor and assistants.





## SECT. II.

1636.

Jan.

In the month of January, 1636, the church at Cambridge was gathered by Mr. Shepard with great solemnity. It was there questioned, how many persons might constitute a church. The number three was thought too small ; but it was determined, that seven might lawfully constitute a church. Mr. Cotton was present, and gave the right hand of fellowship to the newly organized church.

25 Feb.

The churches of Lynn and Salem were much divided. Corn was scarce ; and removals frequent. A general fast was proclaimed. This church in particular observed it with great devotion.

April.

The principal part of the old church at Dorchester having removed, Mr. Mather and others began a new one. Several persons attempting to join them were rejected for the present, on the idea, that they hated sin, not so much because it was in itself odious to God, as because it was hurtful to themselves.

It having been made manifest from the scriptures, that a certain number of magistrates should hold their offices during life, Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Dudley were accordingly chosen upon that principle.

The peculiarities of Mr. Williams were still a source of inquietude among the churches. The colonists were frequently returning, for the purpose of commerce or friendship, to the parent country. When there, it was natural for them to worship at the churches of their friends. Yet



such was the abhorrence, which Mr. W. entertained for episcopal worship, and such was the rigour of his discipline, that he would suffer none of his congregation to give a moment's countenance to the cause of conformity ; and on such, as had offended, he was sure to impose some sort of penalty. It was agitated in the First Church, whether, out of tenderness to the consciences of their brethren, persons going hence to England should refrain from joining in episcopal worship. It was said, that hearing was not holding communion, and therefore determined in the negative. The next plan was to make them a church by themselves. This was opposed, both because they were too few to make a church, and because the forming of new churches, on such grounds, could not be justified by the word of God. It was, lastly, asked, if they should be excommunicated. This measure was unpleasant, and not to be resorted to, unless they should withdraw themselves, and behave disorderly. A continuance with the church was to procure a degree of toleration in matters of opinion. This is the first ray of liberality, that has shed itself upon the ecclesiastical institutions of our country.

Mr. Peters preached at First Church, and solicited of the congregation, among other things, these two ; first, that they would relinquish the labours of Mr. Cotton, whilst he should go through the scriptures, and raise marginal notes on the difficult passages. The second was, that a



SECT. II. plan of church government might be drawn up  
1636. according to scripture.

Until this time, the First Church had enjoyed a series of unequalled prosperity. But, towards the close of the year 1636, the congregation was distracted by one of the most extraordinary theological controversies, that ever was agitated. A married woman, by the name of Anne Hutchinson, had long been infected with antinomian principles. The opinions, which she first privately and afterwards openly avowed, were such, as these, viz. That the person of the Holy Ghost dwells in a justified person. That no degrees of sanctification furnished any evidence of justification ; and that consequently all the genuine sanctification in a true believer consisted in a personal union with the Holy Ghost. So strenuously did she hold and propagate these and similar notions, that she bitterly opposed those of the clergy and laity, who were for cooling the ebullitions of her enthusiastick zeal. She said, that none of the ministers, Mr. Cotton excepted, preached the covenant of grace ; that they preached the covenant of works ; they could not preach the covenant of grace, because they had not the seal of the spirit ; and that they knew no more of the grace of Christ, than the apostles knew before their master's resurrection.

Mr. Wheelwright, a brother in law of Mrs. Hutchinson, and formerly an episcopal clergyman in England, openly favoured the doctrine of his sister. Others in the church espoused her



cause ; nor was Mr. Cotton himself free from SECT. II.  
suspicion, if he was from blame. 1636.

These opinions were soon noised among the neighbouring churches, and arrested the particular attention of all the ministers. Whilst the general court was sitting, they took an opportunity of visiting Boston, for the express purpose of inquiring into the controversy, and consulting with individuals of the legislature, what was to be done. For so intimately connected, in that day, were the civil and sacred concerns of the state, that, if the church was in danger, the magistrates interfered, or, if the state was threatened, the ministers of religion durst not be silent.

Mr. Cotton and Wheelwright joined the conference, and, by explaining their notions of sanctification, gave tolerable satisfaction.

Mr. Wheelwright being the friend and supporter of Mrs. H. her partisans in the church were desirous of having him associated with Messrs. Wilson and Cotton. The proposition was opposed. It was said, that the church was already furnished with able ministers, who were known to the brethren, and whose labours had been wonderfully blessed, and that it was wrong to hazard the peace of the congregation, by introducing a stranger, whose sentiments and conduct had already begun to kindle the flames of contention. Governour Vane questioned the ground of opposition, since Mr. Cotton had approved the doctrine of the candidate. Mr. Cotton replied, that he acknowledged a similarity of opinion, on some





SECT. II. of the points in dispute with Mr. W. but since  
1636. he was apt to raise questions of doubtful utility,  
he thought it safest not to have the church proceed  
in his election. Mr. W. was accordingly permitted to take charge of the church at Mount  
Wollaston.

The feelings of the brethren had become highly irritable. The opposition to Mr. Wheelwright had awakened a spirit of animosity. Points of doctrine, which had been calmly discussed in the pulpit heretofore, could not now be touched, without wounding the feelings of some of the brethren. The affair was warmly, though with christian forbearance, contested between Mr. Cotton and governour Winthrop. The latter appeared to great advantage. He seemed equally cautious of imbibing erroneous doctrine himself, and of rashly censuring the errors of others. He dealt with his teacher faithfully, yet affectionately; and concluded the interview by requesting Mr. C. not to talk of the personality of the Holy Ghost, and terms of that nature, which were never used in the purest churches, during the three first centuries, but to confine himself to matters, which were better suited to promote the edification of individuals and the peace of the brotherhood.

Sir Henry Vane, the governour, who had arrived this year from England, and who had a high reputation for seriousness, was rather favourably inclined to the Hutchinsonian superstition. He asserted the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in every believer, and such a personal union, as trinitari-



ans suppose between the Logos and the man Christ Jesus. But Mr. Wilson, the pastor, Mr. Winthrop, and all the more rational part of the congregation desired, that, as the person of the Holy Ghost could not be found in scripture, but was a term of human invention, it might be dis-used.

Though the dispute ought to have been confined to the church, yet the court, from motives of curiosity, love of power, and religious zeal, insisted upon entering into its merits. Mr. Vane was even jealous of the right, which the churches and ministers thought, they possessed, of terminating the controversy independently of the magistrates. But Mr. Peters, a minister of Salem, sharply rebuked the governour and plainly insinuated, that, if governours would concern themselves only with the things of Cæsar, the things of God would be more quiet and prosperous.

The zeal of Mr. Wilson, on this occasion, manifested itself in a lamentation over the dark and distracted condition of the churches, and imputed to the newly broached opinions the divisions, they lamented. Mr. W's speech originated questions on the doctrine of sanctification. Mr. Cotton had, that day, taught, that evident sanctification was evidence of justification; that, in cases of especial desertion, desires of sanctification were actual sanctification, and that the lowest degree of gracious sincerity afforded matter of comfort. Mr. Cotton and the governour however main-

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SECT. II. tained, that nothing could compensate the want of  
1636. a concurrent sight of justification.

Mr. Cotton and others were offended at Mr. Wilson's speech ; and they accordingly went to admonish him. But the pastor and his friends were unable to perceive, that any rule had been violated. On the same terms with the rest of the elders, he had been called to the court, where it was desired and expected, that every one would express his mind with the utmost freedom, both for discovering existing danger, and for remedying the evil. Mr. Wilson explained ; but explanation was unavailing. It was insisted on by his accusers, that he should answer publicly for his indiscretion ; and the governour was forward among those, who with bitterness and reproaches were arraigning the conduct of this benevolent man. Governour Winthrop remarks, " It was strange to see, how the common people were led by example to condemn him in that, which, it was very probable, divers of them did not understand, nor the rule, which he was supposed to have broken, and that such, as had known him so long, and what good he had done for that church, should fall upon him with such bitterness, for justifying himself in a good cause. For he was a very holy upright man ; and for faith and love inferiour to none in the country, and most dear to all men." The teacher also betrayed the weakness of human nature, and too easily joined in the censure of his mild associate. But the meekness and moderation of the pastor triumph-



ed over the misguided zeal of the teacher and the flock. He answered them in the language of gentleness, and by the wisdom of his behaviour calmed the murmurs of opposition. It was also fortunate for Mr. W. that the first time he preached, he was exceedingly happy in his subject, and in his manner of treating it ; insomuch that the governour professed himself satisfied, and laboured in Mr. W's behalf for the satisfaction of others.

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This was not the end of the church's contention. One heretical opinion paved the way for another, and schism succeeded schism. It was maintained, that the Holy Ghost dwells in a believer as much, as he dwells in heaven ; that a man is justified, before he believes ; that faith is no cause of justification ; that the letter of the scripture holds forth nothing, but a covenant of works ; that the covenant of grace, which can be known only to believers, is the vital principle of the scriptures ; that a man may attain to high eminence in sanctification, gifts, and graces, even so as to have special communion with Christ, and after all be damned. In short, with the persons holding these notions nothing would answer, but an immediate revelation, assuring of divine acceptance.

Extravagant as the assertion may seem, these extravagant notions were received by the members almost universally. The pastor and three or four others made the only exception.





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That Mr. Cotton should give his voice in favour of such heretical opinions, it may be rationally supposed, was matter of offence to his clerical brethren. Determined to make him explicit, they stated sixteen articles, on which they entreated unequivocal answers. He complied. On some of the points he was satisfactory ; on others not. His answers induced several replies ; and so much engaged were the ministers in opposition to the prevalent enthusiasm, that they persuaded the general court, at its next session, to have an universal suspension of the lectures for three weeks.

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The year 1637 opened with gloomy prospects. Though oppressed with difficulties at home, the congregation was not insensible to the sorrows of their brethren in foreign climes. The churches in Germany were in a miserable condition. In England lordly bishops were deposing numbers of Christ's faithful followers, making havock among the puritans, and every where introducing the fopperies of papists. The plague was raging on the continent of Europe, where thousands were threatened both with the sword and famine. The depredations of the Indians were frequent in the Connecticut settlement, and anew menaced the peace of their own territory. These troubles, added to their ecclesiastical dissensions, moved the appointment of a general fast.

But the observance of no rites whatever was able to abolish the existing differences on points of faith. Mr. Cotton, alone of all the clergy,



was on the side of the fanatics ; and the very circumstance of his dissenting from his brethren was sufficient to give the dispute a wider notoriety and a keener edge. Though the teacher was not to be shaken from his creed, nor betrayed into rashness, he was far from being easy under the weight of so respectable an opposition ; and, though superiour to the adoption of unworthy means to promote the views of a party, he was yet willing to seize a favourable occurrence for strengthening the cause, which he thought to be just. A ship full of passengers was now ready to sail for England. It was natural to embrace such an occasion for renewing ancient recollections, and disburdening the heart of its cares. " Tell our transatlantick friends," said Mr. Cotton, " that all our strife is about magnifying the grace of God. Some seek to advance the grace of God towards us, and some the grace of God within us. The lovers therefore of the doctrines of grace will here be sure of a cordial reception." Though this message to the unilluminated savoured of nothing, but the honey of the bee ; yet there were others, who felt a sting in the words. Mr. Wilson replied. He said, " I know none among either the elders or brethren of these churches, who do not labour to magnify the grace of God in the justification of believers, as that doctrine is contained in the holy scriptures ; nor are there any, to my knowledge, who deny the importance and necessity of sanctification." The matter of dispute was trivial, and most of the

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SECT. II. bystanders were equally well satisfied with both  
1637. of the divines ; but the effect was unpleasant. Such a theological rencounter under such circumstances indicated, that a wound had been given to the peace of the church, which was not easily healed, and which would frequently bleed before the eyes of the whole community. Because the ministers contended, the people could not agree. One party ranged itself on the side of justification ; the other on that of sanctification ; and the distinction between the advocates for free grace and the adherents to works was as broad, as what separates protestants and papists.

The general court, which commenced its session in March, upheld its interest in the controversy. It had a party in favour of Mr. Cotton and the majority of the church ; but the majority was on the side of Mr. Wilson and his friends. Of course the correctness of the proceeding against Mr. Wilson was questioned, and his speech in the last court, and the whole tenour of his conduct were adjudged not only faultless, but reasonable,

It was in this session voted, that the ministers should be requested to give their advice concerning the authority of the court in ecclesiastical affairs. The ministers complied with the request, and agreed in two things. First, That no legislator, without leave of the court, should publickly be questioned by a church concerning any speech, which he may have made, whilst acting in his legislative capacity. Secondly, That all such



heresies and errors of any church member, as are manifestly dangerous to the state, the court may proceed to condemn, without staying for the determination of the church ; but opinions, turning merely on texts of doubtful interpretation, or on questions, about which wise and pious men have innocently differed, shall first be submitted to the deliberation of the church.

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Mr. Wheelwright was to be questioned at this court concerning a sermon, he had preached, which was said to be seditious. His friends, who made the majority of the church, petitioned the court, first, that, as freemen, they might be present in cases of judicature ; and, secondly, that they would define and publish their power in casuistical and ecclesiastical cases. This petition was ungraciously received, and immediately rejected. The court said, that they were in the habit of determining causes in publick ; but they should insist on the right of private deliberation, whenever they thought proper.

The cause was at length agitated. It appeared, that against all, who walked in a covenant of works, maintaining, that sanctification was an evidence of justification, Mr. Wheelwright in his sermon had bitterly inveighed. Such persons he denounced as antichristians, and excited against them a vehement opposition. He was summoned before the court. His sermon was produced, which he justified without the least palliation, confessing, that he still meant all, which he seemed to express. The elders of the other





SECT II churches, on being questioned, unanimously acknowledged, that they felt themselves pointed at and maligned in the aforesaid discourse. After some debate, he was adjudged guilty of sedition and contempt of the court. His conduct was thought to be marked by peculiar aggravations of guilt. A fast had been appointed, as the means of healing breaches in the peace of the church, which his sermon seemed designed and calculated to widen. From this judgment the governour and a few others dissented, and entered their protest; which however was not admitted, because it exculpated Mr. Wilson, and in this instance disapproved the doings of the court. First Church, also offered a petition in behalf of Mr. Wheelwright, which justified his sermon. The court deferred sentence, until the next session, and took advice of the ministers concerning the propriety of enforcing his sentence. They were diffident in their opinions on the subject, and recommended him to the care of First Church. This was done, and his appearance enjoined at the next court.

These differences gave motion to the pens as well, as spirit of controversy. Among other tracts, the magistrates issued an apology, justifying the sentence of the court against Mr. Wheelwright. Against this sentence the majority of the church had said many hard things. They had also remonstrated in a loud and angry tone, and been guilty of unfairness. In abbreviating Mr. Wheelwright's sermon, they actually altered



both the words and meaning of offensive passages. Mr. W. himself too published a treatise, relative to the dispute, which also spoke a different language from that of the sermon. The sermon was answered, and its doctrine refuted, by the clergy. This answer drew another from Mr. Cotton, who narrowed the ground of controversy ; and in the election sermon, preached, the next day by Mr. Shepard, the differences were so concisely stated, that the affair was brought almost to a close. Indeed so much had been written and said on the subject, so much had been controverted, and so much conceded, that polemick divines of the first perspicacity could alone determine with accuracy, where the point of contention was ; and, if the passions of the community had not been highly excited, the dispute would have seen an earlier termination. The religious combatants were at length agreed in the following particulars. First, that justification and sanctification were together in time. Secondly, that a man must know himself justified, before he can know himself sanctified. Thirdly, that the spirit of God never witnesses to the reality of justification, without a previous conviction of a wonderful work wrought upon the soul. The difference between the controversialists came finally to this. One party affirmed, that the first assurance of a justified state originated in an absolute promise, and not in a conditional one also. The other maintained, that christian assurance arose from a promise partly absolute and partly



SECT. II. conditional. The former held, that no man  
1637. could have any true assurance, without such a sense of a good work having been wrought upon his soul, as no hypocrite could attain. The latter contended, that the only sure evidence of continuing in a justified state was a continuance in a state of holiness.

Mr. Wheelwright, as commanded, appeared at court. Because however a day of general humiliation was appointed, on which all the churches were to choose referees, for settling the differences, a respite was granted him by the court, until its next session. If, at that period, he should retract his error, he was given to understand, that he would probably experience a lenity, which otherwise might not be expected. He answered, If I have been guilty of sedition, let me die. Recantation is out of the question. If you proceed thus unrighteously against me, I shall appeal to the tribunal of my king. The court told him, that they were satisfied of the rectitude of their course, and that, on a revision of his case, their decision would be exactly, what it had been; but if to the meditated conference among the ministers the Lord should afford new light, they would cheerfully use it in ordaining a new sentence.

The design of the magistrates in thus deferring the execution of the sentence was to give ample testimony of their uprightness. The friends of Wheelwright had been so censorious and insolent in their speeches in court, and so outrageous in their conduct abroad, as to injure their cause.



The moderate party was daily waxing stronger both in numbers and influence, and were now able to crush the fanatick and his adherents. But they were willing to make the equity of their measures palpable to the world, by cultivating a temper of moderation, and still extending the conciliatory hand.

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A proof of the pious dispositions of the patriarchs of Newengland is found in many of their institutions, and particularly in their observance of fasts and thanksgivings. On experiencing any publick calamity, a day of humiliation was immediately ordained, and a day of thanksgiving, when Providence had blessed them with remarkable favours. A victory had recently been gained over the Pequod Indians, and, on that account, the 15 June, 1637, was appropriated by all the churches to the exercise of publick thanksgiving.

15 June.

The friends of order, now making a large majority, were resolved, that their opposers should feel their power; and frequent opportunities occurred, in which love of truth and the publick quiet were put in opposite scales. Through the influence of the dominant party, a man, named Greensmith, was censured by the general court for saying, that all the ministers, excepting two, were principled in a covenant of works. This had been said and punished before. The man appealed to the king; but he was nevertheless committed.

The wound however, which fanaticism had received, was by no means mortal. It was con-





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stantly receiving balm and consolation from the parent country. A brother of Mrs. Hutchinson and other friends of Mr. Wheelwright, recently arrived, immediately rallied round the antinomian standard ; and though the administration would allow them neither trust nor countenance, yet they had a large portion of zeal, and of course could not but have a portion of influence. They were continually preaching the peculiarities of their sect, which imbittered, poisoned, and inflamed the popular mind. Such were the effects of their doctrines upon the timid and credulous, that some became intoxicated with the joys of assurance, some deranged, and others were driven to despair. One woman, in particular, of the congregation, having been long worried with terrors concerning her spiritual state, grew at length so furious, that she threw her child into the well, saying, " now my damnation is inevitable."

This unhappy state of religious affairs was viewed with concern by serious and enlightened christians, who carefully seized upon every favourable opportunity for soothing the passions of the populace, and giving a right direction to their zeal. Rev. John Davenport, who, in the course of the past month, had come hither, like many of his profession, for the enjoyment of religious liberty, was laudably instrumental in furthering the work of peace. He preached the thursday lecture from Cor. i. and in his sermon held a strong light over the nature and dangers of those divisions, which had sprung up in the church, and most

17 July.



tenderly pressed upon his hearers the duties of candour, forbearance, and brotherly love. SECT. II.  
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Exhortations of this complexion were not without their effect. Private meetings of ministers and the brethren were had for the removal of misunderstandings. A day of humiliation was observed in all the churches with especial reference to their distracted condition, on 24 July, and on the 30th of the same month, a conference of ministers and elders was holden, in the hope of effectuating pacifick measures. Here Messrs. Wilson, Cotton, and Wheelwright were present. The speech, made by the first of these gentlemen before the court, which at first was so ill received, and which had been the subject of much subsequent altercation, was now reviewed in moments of greater tranquillity. The passions were asleep, and the explanations of Mr. Wilson were heard with candour. He declared to his reverend companion, that, at the time of making the speech alluded to, it was not his intention to condemn doctrines, which they had publicly delivered, but such opinions, as had been disseminated in private circles; and industriously propagated to the injury of serious preachers and upright christians. As to the rest of the speech, it was the unanimous opinion of the elders, that it was inoffensive and even justifiable under the circumstances, which called it forth. Mr. Cotton had no objection to offer against the general sentiment; but gave a conciliatory exposition of the affair on the following sunday. This sudden and favour.



SECT. II. able change in the aspect of the controversy was  
 1637. very observable, especially by those, who knew,  
 that Mr. Wilson had formerly made, in substance, the very same declaration. The fact was, that, in the heat of contention, words and arguments had been used with gentlemen to no effect, because not weighed with care, nor even heard with patience.

20 Aug. On 30 August, began at Cambridge the famous synod, called the assembly, at which all the pastors, teachers, and elders in the country were present, as well those, who had lately arrived from England, as those, who were immediately connected with particular churches. Of course Mr. Davenport was a member of the body. Mr. Shepard, minister of the church in Cambridge, introduced the labours of the assembly by prayer. The first day was consumed in preparation and arrangement. Erroneous opinions were first laid before the synod, next improper expressions, and lastly abuses of the scriptures. On the second day, Rev. Peter Bulkley of Concord, and Rev. Thos. Hooker were chosen moderators; and they continued in office, until the close of the sitting. Eighty opinions were condemned, some as blasphemous, others as erroneous, and all, as unsafe. Almost all the members subscribed the condemnation. A few, though in sentiment with the majority, thought it discreet to withhold their names. Several members of First Church, together with others, disliked the idea of so many opinions being condemned. They said, the votes of the



synod brought a reproach upon the country. SECT. II.

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They disbelieved the statement, on which the sense of the assembly had been taken, and called for the names of persons, to whom these errors were imputed. They were answered, that it could be abundantly proved, that all the errors, which had been named, had authors and abettors in town or in country ; but that prudence dictated the concealment of names. The minority however were too much warmed with the subject to suffer any thing to be secreted. They were vociferous for names and witnesses. In vain did the moderators call to order, and in vain remind them, that, in case of disturbance, the magistrate must interpose. It was answered, that the magistrate had no province in such an assembly. One of the moderators retorted, that, if immediate silence did not ensue, an opportunity would be given for testing the correctness of the two opinions. There was so much severity in this sort of language, that some of the Boston members retired, and came no more to the assembly.

Five points remained in question between Mr. Cotton and Mr. Wheelwright on the one part, and the rest of the elders on the other. The articles, about which the parties were at issue, were embodied, and the mode and meaning of the expressions used were agreed upon by all, excepting Mr. Wheelwright.

The first related to our union with Christ. The question was, if the union take place before





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the operation of faith. It was agreed, that there is a difference between habitual and actual faith, and that there is no marriage union with Christ, until faith becomes actual or operative.

The second related to the evidence of justification. It was agreed, that saving sanctification was coexistent, concurrent, and coapparent with the witness of the Spirit.

It was agreed, that the new creature is not the person of a believer, but a body of saving graces within him ; and that Christ, as a head, quickens, preserves, and actuates, but is himself no part of, the same.

The fourth respected effectual calling. It was agreed, that the soul is enlivened by an operative faith, wrought at the time by the Spirit, and that justification and sanctification are coeval ; yet that God does not justify a man, before he is effectually called, or, in other words, before he is a believer.

It was agreed, that Christ and his benefits may be offered to a man under, but not in, or by, a covenant of works.

When these questions were first agitated, each party delivered its arguments in writing, which were read in the assembly, and afterwards their answers. This mode of doing business consumed much time to no good purpose. But as soon, as they began to state and define their questions, the points in dispute were rendered intelligible, and speedily settled.



Having determined questions of right, those of expediency came next to be considered. Accordingly the last day of its sitting, the synod deliberated and resolved on the following questions.

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1. That though a few women may meet together for the purposes of prayer and mutual advice, yet such an assemblage of females, consisting of sixty or more, as is now every week formed, in which one of them, in the character of principal and prophetess, undertakes to expound the scriptures, resolve casuistical cases, and establish doctrines, is determined to be irregular and disorderly.

2. Though a private member may ask a question publicly after sermon for information, yet this ought to be very wisely and sparingly done, and never without leave obtained of the elders ; but questions on matters of speculation, such as are now agitated in many places, in which doctrines are frequently opposed, and those delivering them bitterly reproached, is on no account justifiable.

3. A person, refusing to come to attend publick worship to receive church censure, may be proceeded against, though absent ; yet it is advisable, if convenient, that the magistrate should compel him to be present.

4. A member, differing from the rest of the church in any opinion not fundamental, ought not to absent himself from the celebration of ordinances ; and, if a member, thus circumstanced, shall desire a dismission to another church, holding



SECT. II. opinions agreeable to his own, the church, to  
1637. which he belongs, ought not to grant his request.

The assembly dissolved itself ; and the governour proposed, that, since the Lord had been graciously present with its members, and its affairs had been so regularly conducted and amicably concluded, a like meeting should be had once a year, or at least the next year, to settle what of controversy still remained doubtful, and nourish dispositions of charity. The motion, as it displayed the goodness of the governour's heart, was universally pleasing ; but it was not thought prudent to adopt the measure.

The governour also moved, that, as there was a difference in different churches in the manner of supporting their ministers, it should be agreed, what mode of maintaining them is most evangelical ; but the ministers feared to decide upon this question, lest it should be said, that the assembly was gathered for their own advantage.

Mr. Davenport, as he had been previously requested by the assembly, preached from Phil. iii. 16. In his sermon he enumerated the principal causes of dissensions among christians, and stated the beneficial effects of the synod. With sound argument and much eloquence he persuaded to unity his christian brethren, who now separated under auspicious appearances. The members of the assembly were boarded, and those belonging to Connecticut were brought and returned, at the publick charge.



However satisfactory might have been the result of the synod to the churches in general, some of the members of First Church were so dissatisfied with it, that, because the success of the synod was mentioned, as one of the causes of gratitude to God, in the autumnal thanksgiving, they absented themselves from the religious exercise. This disrespect to the doings of the assembly was contagious. The hopes of peace, fondly indulged for a time, were found to be illusive. Though Mr. Wheelwright and his party had been confuted in the assembly, yet they persisted in their opinions, and were as busy as ever in nourishing the spirit of ecclesiastical contention.

On 2 November, the general court assembled at Cambridge. They found, that two so opposite parties could not continue in the same body, without putting to hazard the peace, if not the existence of the whole. Former disputes were renewed with all their former virulence ; and the fires of party, which had been seemingly quenched, were found only to have been smothered. Mr. Wheelwright, by persisting in his own justification, rendered abortive all previous exertions for establishing a reconciliation. He was accordingly banished the government. He appealed to the king ; but he was told and convinced, that an appeal of this sort was nugatory. He of course relinquished it ; and the court permitted him to go to his own house, upon promising, that he would leave the jurisdiction, within

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SECT. II. fourteen days. The breach of this promise was  
1637. to be followed by a surrender of his person to the  
magistrate.

It was thought best to pursue a course of energetick policy towards bringing the controversy to a close ; and to follow up the severity towards Mr. W. by a similar treatment of his sister. Mrs. Hutchinson was accordingly sent for by the court. She was formally accused of the errors in sentiment and practice, which have already been described,\* and the charges were sustained by a host of witnesses. This trial was very extraordinary. Perhaps the ecclesiastical annals of no country can furnish a similar instance.

On her entering the court, she was addressed by governour Winthrop in a strain of uncommon solemnity. " Mrs. Hutchinson," says he, " you are called here, as one of those, who have troubled the peace of the commonwealth and of the churches. You are known to be a woman, who have had a great share in divulging and promoting those opinions, which cause our present troubles, and to be nearly joined not only in affinity and affection with some, whom the court have noticed and censured, but you have spoken divers things injurious to the honour of these churches and their ministers. You have also maintained a meeting in your house, which has been condemned by the general court, as a thing not comely in the sight of God, nor suitable to your sex ; and, notwithstanding it was condemn-

\* P. 28.



ed in the opinion of all sober and judicious persons, you have continued the same. We have therefore thought it good to send for you, to understand how things are, that, if you are in an erroneous way, we may reduce you, that so you may become an exemplary and profitable christian among us. Otherwise, if you shall be obstinate in your errors, the court will take such a course, as to prevent your giving us further trouble. I therefore entreat you to say explicitly, whether you hold and assent to those opinions and factions, which have already been handled in court.”

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Whilst the governour was making this speech, and during some time of her first appearance before the court, she was modest and reserved; but her judges entreated her to be open, and insisted upon an honest confession of her secret sentiments, respecting the merit and manner of preaching common among the ministers. She still seemed unwilling fully to reveal her mind. They began to question her, and she to answer them. As much as two days was she before the governour and assistants, perplexed and irritated by their queries. Sometimes indeed she answered with too much pertness and pride; but, for the most part, she referred her accusers and judges to the scriptures, whose authority they all acknowledged, and whose words, it must be confessed, as urged by the woman, often caused them some little confusion. Mr. Cotton was implicated in the examination, and by the mildness of his manner, and his nice discriminations con-



SECT. II. tributed to increase the embarrassment of the  
1637. court. At length it was voted to banish Mrs. H. from the jurisdiction, as a woman unfit for their society, and to imprison her, until the execution of the sentence.

In reflecting upon the course of behaviour pursued in regard to this affair, we can hardly help dropping a tear of compassion over the intolerance of the age, and the hardship attending the case of this female fanatic. It is true, there was plenary evidence, that she possessed an unquiet, bold, and turbulent spirit, and was full of enthusiasm ; yet it is easy to see, that the whole controversy originated in too strict an adherence to the words of the scriptures, without regarding their connexion and spirit, and in a strong attachment to an unbending discipline.

The error was not invisible to several members of First Church. Though they too much favoured the extravagant fancies of Mrs. H. yet it was not solely on that account, that they espoused her cause. They thought, that a spirit of unjustifiable persecution had been indulged, and they were determined to resent it. Their ill-will accordingly manifested itself against the governor. They were desirous, that the ministers should call him before them to answer for the part, he had acted in the affair. Advertised of their wishes, he exculpated himself to the congregation. He told them, that if he were arraigned, he should advise with the elders concerning the power of the church to interfere in civil concerns. He



then showed, that he was in the exercise of his functions, as a civil magistrate ; that in that capacity there was no power paramount to his ; and that though, as a member of the church of Christ, he was, like other members, subject to its rules, yet, as a ruler in one of the kingdoms of this world, he ought to command the obedience of christians. “ What I have done,” says he, “ in this affair, I have done for the maintenance of peace. I can justify by instances in sacred history every part of my conduct. If priests have sometimes laid restraint upon kings, these in turn have undertaken the control of priests. If a magistrate should be guilty of taking private property by theft, he would be amenable to the church ; but if, in discharging the duties of his office, he should banish from the state a disorderly subject, whether or not belonging to the church, I should consider him, as acting without the control of any ecclesiastick authority. I am also able to justify my conduct in this affair by the opinion of several of the clergy and other christian brethren, whose advice I have taken and very carefully followed. In short, I have acted in the whole of this business conformably to my oath, which obliges me to do whatever I think for the glory of God and the common good. It has long been manifest to my friends as well, as to myself, that these opposite parties would not live together in peace, and that the only method of restoring tranquillity to the state was the banishing of the greatest offenders.”





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1638.

March.

15 March.

In the month of March, 1638, Mrs. Hutchin-  
son took up her residence in Roxbury. Here  
she was visited both by the wise and foolish, both  
by the wellmeaning peacemaker and the queru-  
lous disputant. Some went to her house to dis-  
cover the extent and depth of her errors, some  
to cure, and others to multiply and aggravate  
them. The bruit of her heresy was indeed renew-  
ed with so much ardour, that the magistrates  
found it necessary to summon her before them.

She came, and on 15 March, at a publick lec-  
ture, appointed for the purpose, her errors were  
enumerated and condemned. She herself was  
solemnly admonished before the whole congrega-  
tion. Mr. Cotton read the admonition, and une-  
quivocally reprov'd the proud and contentious  
spirit, which had appeared in a woman, who had  
formerly been among the warmest of his admir-  
ers. The general court was now sitting at  
Cambridge ; but the governour and treasurer, be-  
ing members of First Church, were permitted to  
join the congregation in approving the punish-  
ment.

On 22 March, Mrs. H. appeared again. In  
the hope of her repentance, she had been libera-  
ted by the court. She had resided, a little while,  
at the house of Mr. Cotton, that he and Mr. Dav-  
enport might have opportunity of fully detecting  
her errors, exposing them to her conscience, and  
inducing a penitent temper. Their exhortations  
were not wholly without effect. She retracted in  
writing most of what were called her *familistical*



opinions ; yet with such modifications and restrictions, as rendered her acknowledgment of no value in the estimation of the church. They required an oral explanation, which should express more clearly a renunciation of her heresies. She then declared, that it was just in God to leave her to imbibe and disseminate these wrong opinions, for slighting his sacred ordinances and reviling the rulers of his people. This confession, which was made apparently under the influence of a christian temper, and which concluded with a request for the prayers of the church in her behalf, awakened an expectation, that she might return to something like a decorous behaviour. But this expectation was baseless, as the fabrick of a vision. The moment they came to particular definitions, she was as wild and impudent as ever ; and so palpable were her contradictions, that she astonished and alienated those, who had formerly been her advocates. The last gleam of hope having fled, that she would ever conduct herself, as a sober and peaceable member of the church, a motion was made for her excommunication. Feeling a tenderness for the woman, and somewhat of horror at the contemplated measure, some were for substituting another admonition ; but the vote passed, and Mr. Wilson pronounced the sentence. The transaction is recorded in the following words. “ Ann, the wife of our brother William Hutchinson, having, on the 15th of the third month, been openly in publique congregation, admonished of sundry errors held by her,

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SECT. II. was, on the same 22d day, cast out of the church  
1638. for impenitently persisting in a manifest lye, then  
expressed by her in open congregation, the 15th  
of the same month, 1638."

After excommunication, her spirits, which had been previously depressed, revived, and she gloried in her sufferings, thanking God, that she was counted worthy to be abused for the sake of Christ. But her own joy, on this event, could not have exceeded what was felt by the bulk of the people. They had so long been agitated by this vexatious affair, and such bickerings had it caused in families as well, as churches, that the prospect of its termination was universally pleasing.

Notwithstanding the order of court, Mrs. Hutchinson seemed inclined to linger among her friends. Accordingly, two or three days after her excommunication, the governour sent her a warrant, obliging her to leave the limits of the jurisdiction, before the close of the month, and to abide in her house, until her departure. On the 28th, she went by water to her farm at Mount Wollaston, whence she was to sail with Mr. Wheelwright's family for Piscataqua. But she changed her mind, and journeyed by land to Providence, and thence proceeded to an island in the Narraganset bay, which her husband and others of her sect had purchased of the Indians, with the view of commencing a settlement by themselves.



Although Mrs. Hutchinson was gone, it was long, before the effects of the controversy respecting her ceased. Neighbouring congregations could not but be interested in it; and it had produced a strong sensation in the whole vicinity. Roxbury church, in particular, contained members, who subscribed the obnoxious petition. They were however admonished at first, and, because they would not submit to the censures of the church, were eventually excommunicated.

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Although it should seem, that the magistrates and ministers, united as they were in governing the state and church, were terrible and irresistible in their sway, yet there were not wanting instances, in which their power was defied. Just before the expulsion of Mrs. H. and whilst the court was sitting, one John Green of Providence wrote a letter to the governour and assistants in an uncourtly style. This man had accused the court, and probably with reason, of acting in an arbitrary manner; of persecuting Mr. Williams and his friends; and of cruelly restraining them from divulging their opinions. This freedom of speech had procured him a fine. He had acknowledged his errour, and his fine had been remitted. But now he criminated his former submission, and justified himself in his first act of repugnance to what he deemed an intolerant spirit. It was to no purpose to send to Rhodeisland for this offender; but the court ordered, that, if he and certain others, believed his confederates,





SECT. II. should be found in this jurisdiction, they should  
1638. either confess their fault, or obligate themselves,  
on pain of imprisonment, to be seen no more  
hereafter within the limits of the state.

At this court also several military officers of distinction, who had espoused the fanaticism of Mrs. Hutchinson, were sent for and examined. They acknowledged, that they had been misled by the pretence of exalting Christ and debasing the creature. Experience had taught them, that they had followed a delusion, the natural tendency of which was to promote schism among churches and individual christians. They blessed God, that he had showed them their error, before it had become fatal to their peace.

Thus ended one of the most intricate, vexatious, and unhappy disputes, that ever distracted an infant community. Much blame undoubtedly belongs to the antinomian party, by whom it originated ; but the magistrates and ministers are not wholly to be exculpated. Our ancestors had settled this country for the sake of enjoying the rights of conscience and the liberty of private judgment. Yet here was a woman arraigned, condemned by the court, expelled from the church, and banished the commonwealth for doing nothing more, than the exercise of this freedom implies. The catastrophe of this deluded and unfortunate woman and her family it is melancholy to relate. Her husband, being one of the purchasers of Aquetneck, sold his estate in Massachusetts, and removed with his family to that isl-



and. On the death of Mr. H. in 1642, Mrs. Hutchinson, dissatisfied with the people or place, removed to the Dutch country beyond New Haven ; and, the year after, she and all her family, consisting of sixteen persons, were killed by the Indians, with the exception of one daughter, whom they carried into captivity.\* Several strange stories respecting this woman and her companion, Mrs. Dyer, are to be found in Winthrop's journal, which at this day are hardly credible. They are of little importance, and hold no proper connexion with the merits of the controversy.

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Although we have reprobated the spirit, with which this long dispute was managed, on the part of the governour and the majority of the clergy, yet perhaps they could hardly have been more lenient. On a first view of the affair, we are ready to wonder, that the private opinions of a woman, and even the parlour lectures, she was pleased to hold at her house, should excite so strongly the apprehensions of the most learned and powerful men in the state. We are ready to ask, what harm could have arisen from the sentiments, lectures, and even calumnies of this infatuated female, so long as she enjoyed no peculiar political privilege, and could nowise direct the power of the magistrate. Yet reflection teaches us, that human nature was the same at that period, as it is now ; and we know, that those,

\* Holmes's Ann. i. 298.



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who then held the reins of government in the state and church, were wise and good men. Candour therefore would lead us to conclude, that they did what, on the whole, was best to be done, and that the peace of the christian community could not otherwise have been preserved.

The temper of these times is visible in the care taken by the court to guard against extravagance in dress. It was imagined by some of the magistrates, that the women indulged themselves in too much expense this way. They accordingly conferred with the ministers on the subject, and charged them to address themselves to the consciences of their hearers. The ministers promised to attend to the matter ; but it was found, that their own wives participated in this fault, and therefore little was effected in the business.

Two years since, a Mr. Bernard, of Batcomb, Somersetshire, England, transmitted a manuscript to the magistrates, and another to the ministers, the object of which was to show, that the mode of gathering churches in this country was wrong. So busily had the clergy been occupied, since the arrival of this work, with the hutchinsonian dispute and its consequent mischiefs, that none had found time to answer it. It was now answered by Mr. Cotton, who, about this time also, replied to another treatise written in defence of a form of prayer.

In December, this year, a woman was hanged for murdering one of her children. She had been a member of the church at Salem, but had been



excommunicated for antinomianism ; and she pretended to justify her crime by internal revelations. SECT. II.  
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On the recommendation of the magistrates and ministers, a fast was kept to deplore the prevalence of the small-pox, the want of zeal in the professors of religion, and the general decay of piety. Mr. Cotton, in his exercises on that occasion, copiously and particularly lamented his own and the church's indolence and credulity, whence it happened, that the errours, which had required immense labour to extirpate, had become so generally disseminated. He stated the particular reasons and manner of his deception, and justified the measures, which had been adopted to expatriate the fomentors of ecclesiastical discord.

The behaviour of the hutchinsonians but too well justified the severity, they had experienced. At Aquida, whither they had retired, they were constantly broaching some diabolical error. Among other foolish notions, they maintained, that women had no souls, that moral virtues were the antichrist mentioned by the apostle Paul, and that the devil and the Holy Ghost had an indwelling with every believer.

Those, who went to the falls of Piscataqua, gathered a church there. They wrote to First Church, desiring the dismissal of Mr. Wheelwright, whom they were about to employ, as an officer. First Church refused to comply with the request, because Wheelwright did not himself join in the





SECT. II. request. A personal application on his part was  
1639. afterwards made, which was immediately granted.

A Mrs. Oliver of Salem, whose temper had been soured by sufferings in England for nonconformity, caused the court, about this time, no little uneasiness. The magistrates and churches of Massachusetts were also much disturbed by the contentions at Providence. The degree of ecclesiastical liberty, which Mr. Williams there introduced, seems to have been greater, than the people were able to bear ; and he had acted on maxims, the consequences of which were not clearly foreseen.

A church, recently formed at Weymouth, settled a minister by the name of Leathall, who became unpopular at court. It was alleged against him, that he innovated upon the order of the churches, and, in particular, that he was for the general admission of baptized persons to the communion, without a particular examination of their faith. However salutary this species of reform might be, in certain circumstances, it was inexpedient at that age of the Newengland church. It brought upon Mr. L. and his church the whole weight of the odium theologicum. His measures were controlled ; and he was compelled publickly to retract his opinions. This was not all. It was unsafe to express an opinion, that the christians at Weymouth had a right to institute whatever discipline they conceived to be agreeable to the scriptures. Every man, in short, who attempted to act unfettered by the decrees of the court, and



the judgment of the ministers, found himself circumscribed. The punishment of one Britton, in particular, is worth recording. He had spoken reproachfully of the answer, which was written to Mr. Bernard's book, against the mode of constituting and governing the American churches, and had moreover freely espoused the cause of Mr. Leathall. For this conduct, as he had no property to pay a fine, which they might impose, he was openly whipped.

In the beginning of this year, the church was troubled with a Capt. Underhill, who, after behaving in a licentious manner in Boston, went to Piscataqua, where he derided the censures and authority of the church.

Mr. Cotton, preaching from Kings viii. 8. undertook to show, that, when magistrates are obliged to provide for the maintenance of ministers, the churches are in a declining condition. He gave it, as his opinion, that the preachers of the gospel should be supported, not by lands, revenues, and tithes, which are the occasion of pride, contention, and sloth, but by the voluntary contributions of their hearers.

At Providence Mr. W. and some of his company were rebaptized, a few months since; after which he denied communion with all others. Now again he was ready to question his second baptism, unable to derive its authority from the apostles, otherwise than by the ministers of England, whom he judged no authority whatever. In this difficulty he imagined, that God would



SECT. II. raise up some apostolick power. He therefore  
1539. devoted himself to the expectation of that office.

Formerly he could commune with none, but his wife, now he was in charity with professors of every class. On account of his thus shifting his ground, some of his followers left him, and returned to the churches, whence they had issued.

A lesson on morals may be taken from a circumstance, which, this year, happened. At the general court, holden in November, great complaint was made of the oppression of certain traders. One Robert Kaine, who kept a shop in Boston, was notorious. The deputies fined him 200*l.* and the magistrates 100*l.* The last sum only was paid. After the court had censured him, he was called to account by First Church. He bewailed his offence ; but a partial defence was set up by him or his friends, on the ground, that if a man lost in one commodity, he might make it up in another, and that, if through ignorance a man had given more for an article, than it was worth in Europe, he might sell it for more, than it was worth in Newengland. These things afforded Mr. Cotton an opportunity, on the next lecture day, to expose the errour of such false principles, and to give some directions on the subject. *The false principles were these.* 1. A man may sell as dear, and buy as cheap, as he can. 2. If a man lose by casualty in some of his commodities, he may raise the price of the rest. 3. That he may sell, as he bought, though he paid too dear, and though the commodity be fallen. 4.



That as a man may take the advantage of his own skill, so also he may of another's ignorance or necessity. 5. Where time is given for payment, the same recompense is to be taken of one, as of another. SECT. II.  
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*Rules for trading were these.* 1. A man may not sell above the current price, that is, such a price, as is usual in the time and place, and as another, who knows the worth of the commodity, would give for it, if he wanted it ; as that is called current money, which every one will take. 2. When a man loses in his commodity for want of skill, he must look at it, as his own fault or cross, and therefore must not lay it upon another. 3. When a man loses by casualty of sea, it is a loss cast upon himself by providence, and he may not ease himself of it by casting it upon another. For a man would thus seem to provide against all providences, that he should never lose. But where there is a scarcity of the commodity, there men may raise their price, for now it is a hand of God upon the commodity, and not the person. 4. A man may not ask more for his commodity, than his selling price, as Ephron to Abraham, the land is worth so much.

Some of the brethren were for excommunicating the man ; but he was excused by a simple admonition, on the presumption, that his error was rather in his judgment, than in his heart.

Towards the close of the year 1639, the congregation meditated the rebuilding of their house





SECT. II. of worship. The old one, which was erected in  
1632, having become not only decayed, but also  
too small to accommodate the people, there was  
no question about the necessity of a new house,  
but a wide and warm difference of opinion respecting where it should stand. Some of the inhabitants were for placing it on what was then called the green, now probably common street, which was the governour's first lot. Others, particularly the tradesmen, were inclined to build it still nearer the market, than where the old one stood, which was near the spot now occupied by the northwest corner of the Exchange. Many words were expended in both talking and writing on the subject. Mr. Cotton, without whom neither ecclesiastical, civil, nor secular affairs apparently prospered, at length interfered. It was unsafe, in his opinion, to remove it to the green, as many persons had purchased and settled round the market, in the expectation of being accommodated; as in other things, so in their proximity to the place of worship. It was finally determined with a good degree of harmony to erect the new church on the plat, where the Old Brick lately stood, and which now is covered by the block of buildings in cornhill square. The contractors for the work calculated, that it would cost 600%. They offered to take the old for half that sum, and the complement was to be supplied by voluntary contributions of the people. The church however cost about 1000% ; yet the expenses



were defrayed without either murmurs or assessments. SECT. II.

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The religious society was now in a prosperous state. That disaffection, which a majority of the members had formerly manifested towards the pastor and governour, had happily subsided, and all was tranquillity and love. A while since, these gentlemen were viewed, as under a covenant of works, and having no interest in the doctrines of grace. But, under these suspicions and cool treatment, they had behaved with great meekness, never complaining of unkind usage, nor manifesting zeal for the propagation of their own opinions. Though often and strongly solicited to withdraw themselves from communion, they had withstood the solicitation, until now the odium, which was upon them, had gradually worn away, and they found themselves in possession of the wonted confidence and affection of their friends. The governour in particular had a proof of the returning love of the brethren, when, suffering a heavy loss, through the delinquency of a bailiff, they generously presented him with 200*l*. Men of prudence have here a fresh stimulus to perseverance in a course of moderation, and a new proof, that principle and truth will eventually triumph over faction and falsehood.

In truth, the temper of the times had begun to soften, and, if theological combatants had lost none of their inward bitterness, they had yet learned to contend with better manners. Somewhat of this accommodating disposition is visible



SECT. II. in a dispute, which happened about this time between the magistrates and ministers, concerning the frequency and length of lectures. It was matter of observation and complaint among many, that the minds of the people were too highly excited on the subject of religion, and that their health and property were impaired by a continual routine of devotional exercises. It was therefore proposed, that the general court should correct the procedure by some wholesome restrictions. Ministers were grieved at the proposal and said, that, admitting the evil to exist, it ought not to be cured in this way ; for it would be a virtual subjection of the ecclesiastical to the civil authority, which would go to abridge the liberties of the church, and create a stigma on the age in the eye of posterity. Finding the clergy so hurt by the intended measure, and knowing their influence in the community, the magistrates pushed the matter no further. The discussion was nevertheless attended with salutary consequences.

1640. It seemed, as though the hutchinsonian controversy was never to be terminated. In March, 1640, the church sent a deputation of three members to Aquida to learn the grounds, upon which the church in that place admitted to communion excommunicated members. But the mission was worse than useless. It served to foment a party spirit at home, and to exasperate the minds of those, for whose benefit the measure was intended. The persons, admonished, disclaimed any alliance with First Church, and of course its au-



thority. They had adjoined themselves to another church, and, as members of the new church, claimed the right of making their own regulations. This was not the only instance of the active, artful, and persevering spirit of Mrs. Hutchinson. She was continually fruitful of contrivances to secure her power, and to entangle in her toils the young and unwary. Two young men, designed for the ministry, by the names of Collins and Hales, were successively led by curiosity to be acquainted with so extraordinary a character. Their curiosity ended in a complete subjection to her sway.

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1640.

Ineffectual as had been many efforts of the church towards producing a penitent temper in her refractory children, there is an instance on record of a different sort. One capt. Underhill, a notorious rogue, had often been admonished and suspended, and was at length cast out of the church for his ambitious, lascivious, and adulterous conduct. Still he showed no signs of repentance. Waxing worse and worse, he seemed ripening for eternal perdition. At Piscataqua he had established a church, and put himself in the governour's chair. But his civil and ecclesiastical power was wholly directed to promote his own selfish and diabolical ends. Once indeed he pretended to something like a reformation; but his hypocrisy was too evident to deceive the most charitable and credulous christian. All at once however he came from the eastward, and threw himself at the feet of the church. All disguise





SECT. II. and palliation and pride were at an end. With

1640.

abundance of tears he bewailed and aggravated his offences, justifying the afflictive dispensations of providence towards him, and all the frowns and censures of the church. He went to the general court, which was then sitting, and there repeated his dolorous contritions. Yet not many months elapsed, before he was as diligently as ever at work in scenes of contention and iniquity.

1641.

Ever since the commencement of the hutchinsonian dispute, there had been so much talk and dissensions about the rights of the church and the authority of the court, that it was thought necessary by some, that the power of each should be exactly defined. A motion to this effect had been made, at a former session of the legislature. At the session holden in October, 1640, the subject went through a new discussion ; but there was so great a difference of opinion among the members, that no decision was obtained.

In the face however of that rigorous discipline, which was supported by the joint authority of magistrates and ministers, there were some, who were bold enough to indulge the utmost liberty of thought and expression. A Mr. Hugh Bewett, for instance, made no secret of declaring his belief, that he was free from original sin, and that, for some time past, he had been guilty of no actual transgression. In this avowal he seemed desirous of gaining no peculiar reputation for sanctity ; for he maintained, that similar purity of life is attainable by christians in general. Yet he was



thought a monster of impiety, and by the court of assistants banished the jurisdiction. SECT. II.

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At the autumnal session of the general court, in 1641, it was ordered, that the ministers should agree upon a form of catechism, which should be printed for general use.

It was again the misfortune of our church to be troubled with one or two members of the Hutchinson family. Rumours of their new and increasing heresies at Aquida had sometimes reached this part of the country ; but, as they were at a great distance, little apprehension was felt concerning them. Becoming every thing by turns, they at length turned baptists ; and, as if the parent church had not been sufficiently enlightened with their new divinity, a son of Mrs. H. and a son-in-law, named Collins, came to Boston with a fresh supply of innovating doctrines. It was now taught by these fanaticks, that there had been founded no true churches, since the days of the apostles ; that the church was at present in the wilderness ; that she could enjoy no ordinances, and make no progress, until she came forth from her state of darkness. Hearing certain of their scandalous speeches against First Church and the civil government, the governour sent for Collins and Hutchinson, who came before him, and who, refusing to acknowledge contrition for their errours, were committed to prison. The court afterwards fined the former of these men 100*l.* and the latter 50*l.* ; but, as they utterly refused to pay, patiently remaining imprisoned, the



SECT. II. magistrates relented, remitted their fines, and  
1641. gave them their liberty.

Perhaps the morals of the inhabitants of the town never were purer, since its settlement, than at the present period. It is said, that of twelve hundred men bearing arms on a training day not one was intoxicated, or guilty of using profane language.

It may be proper here to mention an instance of pastoral fidelity in Mr. Cotton. It was moved in caucus by one Mr. Hathorne, a man of some influence, that two of their deputies, of long standing, who had fallen into low circumstances, but otherwise respectable, should be dropped and succeeded by others in more eligible circumstances. Mr. Cotton, hearing of the project, took occasion, on the next lecture day, pointedly, though prudently, to condemn it. He taught, that, if old and faithful officers had grown poor in the publick service, they should be maintained at the publick expense. The reproof was clearly understood and pungently felt ; for the motion was never renewed.

1642. The unbounded liberty of opinion, which was tolerated at Providence, was, at times, the occasion of no little disturbance. Gorton was incessantly busy and sometimes mischievous. It was contended amongst them by some, that a portion of power belonged to the church ; others maintained, that she had none. Mr. Williams moderated the fury of the parties.



One Turner of Charlestown, having led an immoral life, became alarmed at his situation by the preaching of Mr. Shepard. His religious melancholy rose to such an intolerable height, that he threw himself into a pit and drowned.

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William Aspinwall, who had formerly been banished for his adherence to Wheelwright, came and voluntarily confessed his errors, and was received into the bosom of the church. He did the same to the general court, who thence released his banishment.

Capt. Underhill was now in favour with the church, who assisted him in his preparations to go with his family and seek a settlement among the Dutch in the state of Newyork.

A cooper's wife at Hingham, under the influence of enthusiasm, went to a creek in the neighbourhood of her house and threw in her child, about three years old, with an intention to drown it. This attempt was repeated, though it proved successful through the interposition of passengers. She assigned no other reason for her conduct, than an endeavour to save her child from everlasting misery ; and she could not endure, that it should suffer that torment, of which she was certain. She insisted upon it, that she had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and was incapable of repentance.

In this year appeared a surreptitious edition of Mr. Cotton's book on the seven vials. A Mr. Humphrey had gotten the notes from a man, who





SECT. II. had taken them in short hand from the preacher's  
1642. mouth, and printed them in London. Mr. Cotton complained much and justly of this injury ; not that he was ashamed of his sentiments, but he was entitled to the care, at least, of perusing and correcting the copy, before it was printed.

Almost every year brought generous contributions of people into the infant settlement from the parent country. Latterly however from the circulation of unfriendly reports concerning New-england, the spirit of emigration had greatly cooled. It was therefore a pleasing circumstance to welcome, in September of this year, the arrival of Mr. William Hibbins with a small company, whose dispositions and habits were in unison with the feelings and views of those, who had already become attached to the soil. Their voyage had been perilous, and their thanksgiving to almighty God for the escape, they had made from a world of dangers, were proportionally fervent and observable.

It was in this year, that Messrs. Cotton, Davenport, and Hooker received an invitation from England to visit that country, for the purpose of sitting in synod upon the principles and mode of ecclesiastical government. The request excited much attention and a diversity of opinion. Mr. Cotton, at first, thought favourably of a compliance, and so thought Mr. Davenport ; but Mr. Hooker, in this instance wiser than his brethren, openly gave it, as his opinion, that it was not their duty to leave their flocks in this wilderness, and



and traverse an ocean of three thousand miles to enter upon disquisitions and a controversy, of which it was impossible to foresee the probable termination. Several circumstances, fortunately for these worthy divines, obstructed their voyage ; for letters soon were received from England, informing of a breach between the king and parliament, and advising the ministers to remain in Newengland.

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Another application of a different nature shortly after was received from Virginia. It was addressed to the general court, and gentlemen of influence in the community, beseeching them to send ministers of the gospel into that region, that its inhabitants might be privileged with the preaching and ordinances of Jesus Christ. Messrs. Phillips, Tomson, and Miller were designated by a meeting of the ministers at thursday lecture ; but Mr. T. only could be prevailed on to obey the call.

If ministers were unwilling to emigrate from Massachusetts, others were differently inclined. Many persons, growing discontented with their situation, thought to mend it by a removal ; but they not only thence lost the benefit of the education, discipline, and worship of christians ; but also plunged themselves into new and inextricable difficulties of a temporal kind. These distresses excited so much sympathy, and the propensity to emigrate nevertheless continuing, that it began to be a question in the church, whether, among christians thus situated, emigration was



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lawful. It was said, on the one part, that people coming together into a wilderness of beasts and savages, and here entering into a state of civil and ecclesiastical society, do implicitly bind themselves to support that social state. How then can they break away from such a society without the general consent? Who would abandon the privileges of European society for a residence in the desert, if he must run the risk of being left to subdue it alone? If one may take up his connexions, so may another; and in the event of a general departure, where is the commonwealth, the hope of so many ardent and excellent minds? Where is the church, which was planted with so much difficulty, and watered with so many tears? On the other side, it was alleged, that, if restraint was begun to be laid on the actions of settlers, there was no knowing, what would be the end; that enterprize would be checked; that it was resisting that very liberty, in the exercise of which this colony was commenced; and that people never would vigorously assist in building up a state, in which they were compelled to remain. It was therefore pretty generally agreed, that all should enjoy their freedom, though it clearly was the duty of each one to choose rather with Moses to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to seek temporal ease and pleasure at the hazard of ruin.

In November, 1642, arrived here from the island of Madeira a small ship laden with wines and fruit, in which came her owner, Mr. Parish. This



gentleman had lived several years with papists (SECT. II. and jesuits, who endeavoured to dissuade him from coming to Newengland, telling him, that its inhabitants were the worst of all hereticks, the destroyers of bishops and churches, and the promoters of all sorts of mischief. On coming to this country however, he found the previous representations of it to have been false. He blessed the providence of God, which had conducted him hither, and departed with a declaration, that he would not lose what he had gotten in Boston for the wealth of the world. 1642.

On hearing the news of the civil wars between the king and parliament of England, First Church devoted a day to fasting and prayer; and her example was followed by most of her sister churches. These days of humiliation, in the opinion of the magistrates, were becoming too frequent; but they neither durst nor chose to abridge the liberty of the churches. 1642.

The mode of raising the salaries of ministers was different in different churches. Some did it by taxation, others by voluntary contribution.

On 4 June, Mr. Knolles, having returned from Virginia, whither he and his fellowlabourers had gone to disseminate the gospel, presented letters from respectable gentlemen in that region to the governour and some of the ministers. It appeared that the mission had been productive of happy effects.

There are instances of severity in the discipline of the church, which have been salutary in the





SECT. II. issue. A Mrs. Hett had been cast out for her  
1643. wicked and blasphemous speeches, who became  
alarmed at her situation, reformed her manners,  
and returned to the discharge of her pious and  
social duties.

In this year, assembled all the ministers of Massachusetts in the town of Cambridge. About fifty composed the assembly. They all boarded in commons, during the session; and their diet was so simple and so economical, that each meal was furnished to the members for sixpence a piece. Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker were the moderators. The object of the convention was to resist the attempts of certain persons, lately arrived at Newbury, and others to establish a presbytery.

The church was troubled with the errors of the fanatical Gorton, whom the governor took with his adherents and brought to Boston. At first they refused to attend public worship, but were at length prevailed on to hear Mr. Cotton, on condition that they might have liberty of replying to his arguments. The opinions of this sect, like those of Mrs. Hutchinson, were a compound of calvinism and fatalism, and almost utterly unintelligible to the generality of christians. They maintained, for instance, "that there was nothing now but Christ; that ordinances, means, and ministers were merely the inventions of men, and shrines only of the temple of Diana; that, as Christ lived eternally, so he died eternally; that magistracy was an idol of the people; and that a



man might as well be a slave to his own belly, as to his own species." Such was the nonsense, which, in those days, disturbed the peace of the churches, and which the magistrates and ministers thought fit to chastize with fines and imprisonment. SECT. II.  
1644.

In the beginning of the year 1644, Mr. Wheelwright, who, five years since, had caused the church so much uneasiness, wrote a letter to the general court, in which he discovered a spirit of moderation, penitence, and love of peace, that gave great satisfaction. He was accordingly, after a time, released from the odium and sentence of banishment, under which he had been holden.

Congregationalists were alarmed at the increase of the baptists. The magistrates, after encouraging the elders to use with them the means of reformation, ordered, that such, as continued obstinate, should be banished. It ought to be remembered for the honour of the ministers of the Prince of peace, that they did somewhat towards softening the rigour of this unrighteous decree.

There was, this year, a petition drawn up in Hingham, and signed by seven of the inhabitants, complaining, among other things, of the want of religious liberty. It stated, that there were many persons in the community of good morals, and members of the church of England, who are yet prohibited the Lord's supper, because they will not subscribe the church's covenant. Such a subscription they could not justify to their consciences, on the principles of the scriptures. Yet 1645.



SECT. II. they were compelled to attend on publick wor-  
1645. ship, every Lord's day. Much notice was taken  
of them, and many hard speeches uttered concerning them, if they did not stay, whilst the children of others were baptized, although baptism was denied to their own ; and in some instances they were forced to contribute to the maintenance of such ministers, as would not receive them into their flocks. It was, on the ground of these complaints and disabilities, that they requested liberty, either as episcopalians of enjoying the benefit of ordinances with congregationalists, or of forming an episcopalian establishment for themselves.

Six of these seven petitioners were cited before the court and charged with a number of offences and a general character of rebellion to the order of the churches, and accordingly were fined and imprisoned. Governour Winthrop's popularity was put at hazard by this affair ; but he defended himself with so much firmness, and he possessed so entirely the confidence of a great majority of the commonwealth, that he was exculpated, and thenceforth shared more liberally than ever in the affections of the people. The petitioners however were not to be thus disheartened in their purpose. They resolved to lay their case before the parliament of England ; and Dr. Child and Mr. Fowle accordingly took ship immediately in prosecution of this purpose. The government of Massachusetts were alarmed at the measure, and did every thing in their power to frustrate the design. Mr. Cotton hesitated not in one of his



sermons to declare, that, if any person should attempt to carry writings complaining of the ecclesiastical proceedings of this country to Britain, he would be a Jonas in the ship. These words of the patriarch were considered oracular. It so happened, that a violent storm arose on the passage, and one of the female passengers, distracted with fear, went to Mr. Fowle, and by her cries and entreaties prevailed on him to give up the obnoxious petition, which she instantly cast into the sea. Mr. Fowle had however taken care to preserve the original papers, which he published, on his arrival, under the title of "New England's Jonas cast up at London." But the Parliament were too busily engaged in other concerns to take cognizance of the thing.

SECT. II.

1647.

In the year 1648, terminated the synod, which began its session in Cambridge, in 1646. Its sessions had been short and infrequent. Its labours principally consisted in compiling what is called the Cambridge platform, which, together with the Westminster confession of faith, they now recommended to the general court and to the churches of Newengland.

1648.

In 1650, there were about forty churches in Newengland, and seven thousand, seven hundred and fifty communicants.

1650.

Nothing remarkable transpired in the church from this time until the death of Mr. Cotton. One thousand and thirty-four children had been baptized, since Mr. Cotton's ordination. Of these 538 were males, and 456 females.





## SECT. II.

1652.

There had also been admitted, during this period, that is, from the beginning of 1634 to the end of 1652, 306 men and 343 women, in all 649. Seventeen persons had been admonished publicly, and five excommunicated for irreclaimable errors. It was an uncommonly interesting epoch to the church. A fraternity was to be formed of discordant materials. Many of those, who composed the church, had been educated Episcopalians, and were therefore disinclined to vary from established forms. Others had come to Newengland, rather as adventurers, than as christians, and could hardly be subjected to any ecclesiastical or political rules. But the sagacity and everwatchful discipline of Mr. Cotton was astonishingly efficacious towards conforming all descriptions of characters to habits of obedience and order. The talents, industry, and influence of this man were of such immense importance to the church in its infant state, that it will not be improper to close the section with a few notices of his life, writings, and character.

Rev. John Cotton was born at Derby, England, of respectable parents, in 1584. He was early sent to the grammar school in the place of his nativity, whence he was taken to Cambridge, and admitted a member of Trinity college. His industry and attainments were equally conspicuous; and he soon became first a member, and afterwards a fellow of Emmanuel college in the same university. Frequent opportunities occurred for the exercise of his abilities; and in all of



them he fully disclosed a deep penetration, a fine fancy, and uncommon scholarship. So perfect was his knowledge of the Hebrew, that, it is said, he could easily converse in that language. He cheerfully assumed the profession, to which his parents had destined him, and consecrated his faculties to the good of the church. His first labours in the ministry were bestowed on a congregation in Boston, Lincolnshire, which duly estimated his singular powers and faithful services. But there he was threatened with the rod of prelati-  
cal oppression. He was too simple in his manners to kneel at the altar ; and too busy in unfolding the great doctrines of his master to conform with exactness to the idle ceremonies of episcopal invention. Mr. Cotton fled to a country, where he might read and interpret the scriptures for himself, and worship the Deity without doing violence to the dictates of conscience. In 1633, he embarked for Newengland ; and never did the congregational church in this section of our country receive a more valuable accession from the parent state. On his arrival, which was a joyous event to all descriptions of people, he was immediately associated with Mr. Wilson, as teacher of First Church. Here he interested himself in both the ecclesiastical and civil affairs of the new plantation ; and so commanding and extensive was his influence, that he was styled the patriarch of Newengland. It may be almost said, that from him Boston received its name, and its inhabitants their laws. In expound.

SECT. II.

1652.



SECT. II. ing the scriptures, and in applying their holy  
1652. precepts to the consciences of his hearers, he was remarkably luminous, powerful, and consolatory. All his fellow-worshippers were seriously impressed by his gravity and devotion in the house of God. He was equally eminent for his capacity, as a ruling elder in the church, having an unusual power of expression and management. "He was indeed a burning and a shining light ; and the people were willing, for a season, to rejoice in his light."

It was not however permitted to this great and good man to enjoy an unclouded day of terrestrial happiness. In opposing the tenets of Roger Williams, he was accused of supporting principles, which he had formerly laboured to subvert. England saw him resist the spirit of hierarchy ; here he seemed desirous of cherishing it. Again, in the antinomian dispute, which happened in 1637, concerning Anne Hutchinson, Mr. C. unfortunately espoused with too much tenderness the cause of fanaticism, and, in the heat of the controversy, lost his temper, and, of course, a portion of his dignity and influence. His enemies, for who is without them ? failed not to use his apparent inconsistencies to his mortification. His life was rendered uneasy, and he sighed for the undisturbed repose, which he had vainly hoped to enjoy in this land of promise.

Meekness, piety, goodnature, and talents however, such as fell to the lot of Cotton, could not long suffer their possessour to be comfortless. It



could scarcely happen, that a career of life so [SECT. II.  
honourably begun should be otherwise, than glo- 1652.  
riously finished. A mind bursting with generous efforts for the welfare of society soon regained its tranquillity ; and his affectionate heart received the consolation, he wished, in the gratitude, the confidence, and the improvement of his friends. The clouds, which obscured his descending sun, like a storm of thunder in June, gave way to a mild and peaceful radiance ; and the glories of his departing day had all the majesty of full orb'd virtue. He died, 23 Dec. 1652, at the age of sixty-seven, universally and deeply lamented. Both governours and governed bewailed the loss of a man, who, if he loved the rewards of religion, had a still greater love for religion itself, and who, if he loved the possession of power, was disposed to use it for the security of just men and the triumphs of truth. He carried with him to the tomb the unutterable regrets of his friends ; and every individual of an afflicted community was ready to adopt the words of Elisha, when he beheld the ascending prophet, " My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

*List of Rev. John Cotton's works.*

1. The way of life, in four treatises. Lond. 1641. pp. 481. 4to.
2. Christ the fountain of life. Lon. 1651. pp. 256. 4to.
3. God's mercies mixed with his justice. Lon. 1641, pp. 135. 4to.





SECT. II.

1652.

4. Pouring out of the seven vials. Lon. 1645. pp. 156.  
4to.
5. The church's resurrection. Lon. 1642. pp. 30. 4to.
6. The way of the churches in N. E. Lon. 1645. pp. 116.  
4to.
7. Holiness of church members. Lon. 1650. pp. 95. 4to.
8. Abstract of laws and government. (posth.) Lon. 1655.  
pp. 35. 4to.
9. Keys of the kingdom of heaven. Lon. 1644. pp. 59.  
2d ed. 4to.
10. Exposition on the xiii. chap. of Rev. Lon. 1655. 4to.
11. Milk for babes.
12. Sermon on 1 John: folio.
13. Expositions on Ecclesiastes and Cant. 165. 12mo.
14. Treatise of new covenant (posth.)
15. Answer to Mr. Ball concerning forms, &c.
16. Discourse on grounds and ends of infant baptism.
17. Discourse on singing of psalms.
18. Discourse on things indifferent.
19. Answer to Mr. Cawdry.
20. Answer to Mr. Bayley.
21. Answer to Mr. Williams.



### SECTION III.

From the death of Mr. Cotton, 1658, to the settlement of Mr. Norton, 1656.

THE four years, which elapsed between the death of Mr. Cotton, and the settlement of Mr. Norton, SECT. III. were not strongly marked by any events, either 1652. prosperous or adverse to the church, if we except the waste of life in those, who had contributed to her foundation and support.

The death of Hon. Thomas Dudley, many years lieut. governour, and afterwards for three several years, governour of Massachusetts, happened on 31 July, 1653. He was born at Northampton, England, in 1574. He had been an ardent, active, and useful member of the church, seeking its prosperity with an enlightened and steady zeal. His excessive bitterness against sectaries had been unpardonable in any other, than an age, when the principles of civil and religious liberty were imperfectly understood. He had been conversant with martial as well, as civil life, had filled a variety of offices, and all of them with dignity to himself and usefulness to the publick. The dispute, into which he was led with governour 1653.



SECT. III. Winthrop, in 1631, strikingly displayed the  
1654. piety and gentleness of both. The governour had raised in Mr. Dudley a belief, that Cambridge would be the seat of government, and, on the foot of that expectation, he there planted himself and family. Boston however became the capital ; and Dudley demanded satisfaction of Winthrop for the disappointment and expense, he had sustained. The matter was referred to the ministers, who decreed that the governour should procure them a minister at Cambridge, and contribute to his subsistence ; or, failing in this measure, should give the deputy 20*l.* towards defraying the cost of his building. The alternative was chosen ; but, on paying the stipulated sum, the deputy generously refused its acceptance ; and the affair was terminated with mutual professions of esteem and confidence.

Ecclesiastical concerns were not now the subject of much conversation ; for the state was busily employed in protecting herself against her enemies.

1655. In the year 1655, according to the historians of that day, Mrs. Anne Hibbins was tried and condemned for a witch, and executed in the following year. There is however no notice of this fact in First Church records.

1656. On the extinction of so splendid a luminary, as that of Cotton, it became necessary, in the estimation of the church, to kindle in its place another light. Rev. John Norton of Ipswich, then distinguished for his literary and theological at-



tainments, was mentioned, as a suitable candidate ; and, it was said, had been nominated by Mr. Cotton himself in his last hours. This gentleman soon came to Boston, and resided here awhile, executing the duties of a minister ; but he occasionally visited Ipswich, and, on the death of Mr. Rogers, in 1655, the tradition is, that he was almost persuaded to return to the people of that place. On 29 Nov. 1655, a church meeting was holden at the house of the pastor, in which it was voted to give Mr. Norton 200*l.* towards the purchase of a house, on the supposition that he becomes the teacher of the church. Numerous obstacles impeded the union. After the lapse of nearly four years, the sitting of several ecclesiastical councils, and the decision of the governour and magistrates in favour of his removal, he and his wife were admitted members of First Church, 6 July, 1656 ; and his installation took place, on the 23d of the same month.

From the commencement of the year 1653 to the end of 1656, there had been two hundred and ten children baptized, one hundred and twenty-three of whom were males. Twenty-four persons, during the same period, were admitted to communion, seventeen of whom were women. Three men and as many women had been dismissed, at their own desire, to other churches ; one male admonished for keeping evil company ; three males excommunicated for the sins of drunkenness and adultery ; and one male, acknowledging the sin





SECT. III. of drunkenness, for which he had been suspended,  
restored to the bosom of the church.

1656:

No regular record of marriages and deaths, for aught that appears, was, at this or any subsequent period, kept by any of the pastors, until the time of Dr. Clarke.



## SECTION IV.

From the settlement of Mr. Norton, 1657, to his death, 1663.

IN the opinion of the church and its friends, the settlement of Mr. Norton was an auspicious event. SECT. IV.  
One of his earliest official duties was to go with 1656.  
elder James Penn to Salisbury, for the settling of a religious controversy. In those days, missions of that nature were sufficiently frequent. For a similar purpose he went with a delegate to Hartford, in the beginning of 1657.

A deal of mischief was now happening to the quakers, twelve of whom were banished by the government.

In January, 1657, the following question was proposed to the church, which passed in the affirmative. 1657.  
“Whether the relation of immediate children of church members be such, as giveth the church a church power over them, and consequently, whether it is the duty of the church to exercise that power regularly upon them, that their life and knowledge may be answerable to the engagement of their relation; and whether it be the church’s mind, that solemn notice be given to them seasonably.” It was, in consequence of this



SECT. IV. vote, for some time the practice of the church to admonish and even excommunicate the offending children of church members. In the course of the year, a kind of synod was holden by twenty-six ministers to consult on the subject of enlarging the door to the ordinances, particularly to baptism. It was agreed, that the children of church members should be baptized. For the same and one other purpose, another synod was holden at Boston, in 1662, by recommendation of the general court.

The decision was similar, in the case of baptism, to what had been formerly given. The synod declared, that "church members, who were admitted in minority, understanding the doctrine of faith, and publickly professing their assent thereunto, not scandalous in life, and solemnly owning the covenant before the church, wherein they give up themselves and children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the government of Christ in his church, their children are to be baptized." The other matter before the synod was, whether it be expedient to have a consociation of churches? This question was answered in the affirmative. Yet it does not appear, that any measures were taken to effectuate the design.

The following year is rendered memorable in the church by the death of Mr. Norton. This gentleman was born, 6 May, 1606, at Stortford, Hertfordshire, England, of poor but respectable parents. In early childhood, he discovered a ripeness of wit, which indicated extraordinary



powers in future life. He was seasonably placed at school under Mr. Strange, of Bunningford. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to Peterhouse, where he stayed, until he had taken his first degree. Here a missionary of the roman church, carefully observing his talents and behaviour, used every means to draw him into the support of the catholick faith without success. He left the university for an ushership at the school, and a curacy in the church of Stortford. He here devoted himself to the writing of sermons, and became excellent in the practice. His learning and abilities rendered him an object of attention with the dignitaries of the church ; but his conscience would not suffer him to conform to episcopal ceremonies, which he deemed unscriptural. A fellowship in Katherine-hall, Cambridge, he was also solicited to take by Dr. Sibs ; but his aversion from episcopacy prevented his acceptance. He contented himself with being private chaplain to Sir William Marham, in Two-Knights-house. He was also associated with a number of pious ministers, equally firm with himself in dissenting from the established church, in the maintenance of a stated lecture in his native town, from which, he always thought, he derived professional and personal improvement.

Mr. Edward Winslow, afterwards governour of Plymouth, sailing for England, in 1633, was employed by the people of Old Colony to procure them a minister. In the execution of this design

SECT. IV.

1663.





SECT. IV. he met with Norton, and persuaded him to come  
1663. over.

In the year 1634, Mr. Norton married, and embarked with his wife for Newengland ; but, being driven back by a violent storm, he did not arrive in America, until the following year.

He resided in Plymouth, one winter only, complaining, that his accommodations were not such, as he expected, and preferring the situation of Massachusetts, and the temper of the inhabitants. Having awhile associated with the ministers and people of Boston and the vicinity, he planted himself in Ipswich, where a company of worthy christians contributed as much to his comfort, as he to their edification.

On his removal to this church, he wrote the life of his predecessor in a style of eloquence exceeding any thing, which this country had witnessed in any of his contemporaries. At the age of thirty, his reputation for scholarship was high in the parent country. Here, with the exception of president Chauncy, he was without a rival. In 1644, Gulielmus Apollonius of Zealand, a dutch divine, sent hither a number of questions on ecclesiastical government. It was unanimously agreed among the clergy, that Mr. Norton should assume the task of answering the work. He despatched it, the following year, in the first latin book ever written in this country. It is prefaced by a short address to the reader signed, Tho. Goodwin, Phil. Nye, Sidr. Simpson, dated Lond. Feb. 16, 1647 ; and by an elaborate epistle of some length



to the author, signed Johannes Cotton in Ecclesia SECT. IV.  
 Bostoniensi Presbyter docens. The performance 1663.  
 was celebrated in both hemispheres for the learning, discernment, candour, and elegance, which it displayed.

In the synod, which met at Cambridge in 1646, and protracted its sessions, until 1648, Mr. Norton acted a conspicuous part, revealed an unusual acquaintance with school divinity, and left the traces of his pen in the lines of the platform.

His tenets were in the highest degree rigid, surpassing in terrour even those of the celebrated Calvin. He maintained, that there is one God subsisting in three persons ; that the will of God is the cause of all causes, and second causes the effects of the first cause ; that the will of man is an instrument disposed and determined to its action according to the decree of God, being equally subordinate to it, as is the axe to the hand of the hewer ; that man, even in violating God's command, fulfils God's decree ; that the infallible ordering of the existence of sin for a better end, and the forbidding of sin are not at all inconsistent, but fall under the compass of the same one volition of God, which cannot be resisted or defeated ; that God is not the author of sin, and yet that he does not merely permit it, since he has decreed it ; that the reprobates freely commit such a measure of sin, as fits them for the intended measure of wrath ; that man is a free agent, having a real efficiency, though subordinate to the first cause, which determines the second in its



SECT. IV. operation ; that all mankind participated in Adam's sin, and also have it imputed to them ; that original sin is the hereditary and habitual contrariety and enmity of the nature of man against the whole will of God ; that God has elected, whom in his wisdom and mercy he pleased, to eternal life ; that the conversion of these is the effect of God's spirit ; that good works are necessary, as the way to salvation, but not as the cause ; that the only meritorious cause of salvation is the active and passive obedience of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to believers, and received by faith alone ; that only the elect believe in the Redeemer ; that their faith is the effect of absolute, special, irresistible grace ; and that the will is passive, not having the nature of a free agent, in the first reception of grace.

The severity of his religious system led Mr. Norton to favour a principle of intolerance. He had charity enough to walk with those, between whom and himself there was a difference of sentiment on subjects of minor importance ; but, when he thought the fundamental doctrines of christianity were denied, he justified the magistrate in unsheathing the sword ; not recollecting, that what he deemed a fundamental doctrine might be considered an unessential tenet by a fellow-christian ; and that, since they both had renounced the authority of any earthly infallible judge, the only way to live quietly was to allow to each other the right of inquiring and deciding for himself.



In his publick performances Mr. Norton proved himself master of a copious eloquence, equally captivating to the scholar and the unlettered christian. Those, who had enjoyed his pastoral instructions in Ipswich, frequently travelled to Boston, after his removal, for the benefit of his lectures ; and such was the influence of his prayers on the young divines of that day, that they made him their model, as to the matter and manner of their pulpit devotions.

SECT. IV.

1663.

In private life Mr. Norton was blameless and exemplary, though he had to contend with a choleric temper, and a natural inclination to gaiety.

To his other good qualities Mr. Norton joined an ardent and steady attachment to his adopted country. His patriotism led him to earnest and successful efforts to prevent hostilities between the people of this colony and their Dutch neighbours, and afterward to embark for England in company with Simon Bradstreet, esq. with an address to Charles II. on his restoration to the throne. This embassy however, in its issue, was fatal to the popularity and peace of Mr. Norton. Having faithfully served the interests of the country, the agents returned with this assurance from the king, that he would ratify to the colony its charter. But along with this promise was a requisition, that justice should be administered in his name, and that all persons of sober conversation should be permitted to enjoy the ordinance of the supper themselves, and that of bap-





## SECT. IV.

1663.

tism for their children. Here was an infringement, as the people conceived, of their religious freedom ; and it was instantly reported, that the agents had sold the liberties of the country. Mr. Norton's consciousness of integrity was hardly able to sustain his share of an unmerited reproach. The chilling looks, which he received from countenances, once expressive of nothing but approbation and friendship, damped the ardour of his professional pursuits, and contributed, it is thought, to shorten his days. For, after his return, his wonderful talent in extempore prayer was no longer admired ; and the same sermons, which in other days were heard with a kind of ecstacy, now fell powerless on the ears of a languid auditory. It is traditioned, that even the venerable and benevolent Wilson was heard to say, that he must have another colleague. Mr. Norton died suddenly, 5 April, 1663, leaving no children. He was the author of the following publications.

1. Responsio ad totam quaestionum syllogen, &c. &c. Lond. 1648. 12mo.
2. A letter in latin to John Dury.
3. A Discussion of the Sufferings of Christ. 1653. 12mo.
4. The Orthodox Evangelist. 1654, 4to.
5. Election Sermon, 1657, 12mo.
6. Life of Rev. John Cotton, 1658.
7. Heart of Newengland rent by the blasphemies of the present generation, &c. 1660, 8vo.
8. Election Sermon, 1661.
9. A Catechism.



10. Three choice and profitable sermon s on several texts, SECT. IV.  
 being the last sermons, which he preached at the  
 election, at the Thursday lecture, and on the 1663.  
 sabbath. 1664.

From the year 1657 to the end of 1663, seventy-one members were added to the church, forty nine of whom were females.

During the same space of time, the number of female baptisms was one hundred and fifty-four, and that of male baptisms one hundred and forty-nine.

Concerning the period, to which these minutes relate, we cannot but remark, that a persecuting temper was the fault of the age. The quakers especially were now treated with a degree of severity altogether unjustifiable, on any principles of the gospel or of common humanity. It is to be feared, that Mr. Norton too much approved the course, which was pursued against them. For they cordially rejoiced in his death, and reported, "that the Lord had smitten John Norton, chief priest of Boston, and, as he was sinking down by the fireside, being under just judgment, he confessed the hand of the Lord was upon him, and so he died." Mr. Norton undoubtedly partook of the fault of the age, which was a persecuting temper. Men, who had been imprisoned in England for their zeal in nonconformity, were here imprisoning others for precisely the same fault. They mixed their politicks with their religion, and blended the articles of their creed with consideration for the publick safety.



SECT. IV. The age therefore, of which we speak, was necessarily an age of theological bitterness, inconsistency, and strife. The weaker party was the prey of the stronger, and the conscientious sectary, like Noah's dove, found no rest for the sole of his foot.

1663.



## SECTION V.

From the death of Mr. Norton to that of Mr. Wilson, including the years 1664, 1665, 1666, 1667.

AT the age of seventy-six, Mr. Wilson was once more left alone with the care of the church. It could not be expected, that he should now be able to make very vigorous exertions towards the increase and prosperity of the flock ; yet there appears to have been no diminution of zeal for the cause of religion, either in the pastor or the members. From the beginning of 1664 to the close of 1667, eighty-three persons, forty-nine of whom were females, adjoined themselves to the church. In the same space of time, two hundred and twenty-four children were baptized, one hundred and fourteen of whom were females.

SECT. V.

1664.

The records appear to have been correctly made, and good order maintained in the church.

1665

But the period was come, in which the earthly labours of the pious Wilson were to be exchanged for rest in the mansions of heaven.

This virtuous and amiable man was born at Windsor, England, in 1588, and was son of Rev. Dr. Wilson, prebendary of St. Paul's, London.





SECT. V. He was educated at Eton college, under Udal  
1666. and Langley. After a residence of four years, he was removed to Cambridge, in the 15th year of his age, and admitted into King's college in 1602. Becoming acquainted in this place with a number of pious young men, he occasionally associated with them in his chamber for prayer and the reading of theological books. Having received ordination from a bishop, he was for some time minister of Sudbury, county of Suffolk, where he was silenced for nonconformity. His father used every imaginable means to reclaim him, but to no purpose. He then advised him to enter upon the study of law. This advice young Wilson obeyed, during two or three years ; but his heart was still bent on being a minister of religion. He was permitted to proceed for master of arts ; but the degree was not without difficulty to be obtained, except by subscribing articles, to which he was conscientiously opposed. He however refused to subscribe, whatever the refusal might cost him. He adopted a most solemn resolution to go to the ends of the earth, if he might thence enjoy liberty of conscience and a pure worship. He kneeled at the deathbed of his father for a blessing, which he obtained.

He was employed, as a chaplain in families of rank and opulence, where, with a boldness honourable to his profession, he reproved the profane and censured the levity of the gay and irreligious. Though persecuted and silenced, yet he repeated-



ly obtained a liberty of preaching, through the intercession of friends, and his own perseverance.

SECT. V.

1667.

Such a precarious freedom however was little better, than continual bondage. He resolved upon travelling to a country, which, if it possessed fewer means of knowledge and elegant subsistence, afforded the finest field for the cultivation of unfettered religion.

He came hither in the same company with governour Winthrop and the first settlers of Massachusetts. In 1631, he went to England for his wife, whom he there left the preceding year. He gave it in charge to governour Winthrop and elder Nowell to prophesy and exhort in the church, during his absence. Mr. Eliot, the apostle however, landing about the time of Mr. Wilson's departure, officiated in his stead.

Mr. Wilson returned with his family, in 1632. In 1634 he again crossed the Atlantick, and, after visiting Ireland and several parts of England, came back, the following year, to America, which he thenceforth made his perpetual residence. He here fulfilled, during thirty-seven years, the office of pastor ; three years before Mr. Cotton ; nineteen years in his company ; seven years with Mr. Norton ; and four years after him.

He was more beloved for his humility, benevolence, and sweetness of temper, than admired for his talents, as a preacher, although these, in his younger days, were nowise contemptible. He was strong in faith, yet stronger in love. In many instances he seemed to attain to a full assu-



SECT. V. rance of faith ; and the verity of his predictions  
1667. was proverbial. When Mr. Norton was called to leave Ipswich, to be a successour to Mr. Cotton, the colleague of Mr. Norton, Mr. Rogers opposed the measure. Some persons in company with the latter remarked, that Mr. Wilson by his argument, or rhetorick, or both, would effect his purpose. Mr. Rogers replied, that he was more afraid of his faith, than of his arguments. This reputation for an unwavering faith and a prophetick spirit brought many of his friends to his dying bed, with a request, that he would designate the sins of the times, which, in his opinion, were the most heinous, and which, in their operation, would probably operate most ruinously on the country. He gave his opinion freely, saying, that God would judge the people for their rebellious, self-willed spirit, for their contempt of civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and for their luxury and sloth. Here perhaps we shall do well to recollect, that his mind was greatly enfeebled by age and disease. With all his zeal for religion and benevolence for mankind, he had no sympathy with the sectary. Like Norton, Dudley, and others, he was for compelling the uniformity of irregular christians with other arguments, than such, as were furnished by reason and revelation. Go not after those enthusiasts, said he, for, whatever they may pretend, they will rob you of ordinances, rob you of your souls, rob you of your God.

He indulged a poetical vein in writing anagrams on his friends, in which he always contriv-



ed to convey some moral and religious instruction. In reference to these, which were not always exact, and to his remarkable hospitality, it was said by the witty author of the Simple Cobbler of Agawam, that the anagram of John Wilson was, "I pray come in, you are heartily welcome."

SECT. V.

1667.

In all the offices of friendship and good neighbourhood he seems to have been a model of christian charity, being full of compassion to the distressed, of advice to the friendless, and of consolation to the aged. To designs and deeds of beneficence his heart and his purse were always open. He loved the house and worship of God, and was concerned for the spiritual improvement, not only of his own congregation, but of the neighbouring churches. He was seen assisting at their lectures as long, as he was able to preach; and, after age had palsied his head and his hands, his heart still glowed with the warmth of youth, and he was, conversant among his friends, counselling them to adhere firmly to the good profession of their faith, and in the language of St. John exhorting them, "Little children love one another."

His humility shone brightly to the last. On his dying bed he was surrounded by many of the congregation, who desired to witness the closing scene of the good man's life, and to see with what calmness so excellent a christian would die. He told them, that he should soon go to be with his departed friends in heaven. Yet he added, I





SECT. V. have been an unprofitable servant. The Lord be  
merciful to me a sinner ! He died, 7 Aug. 1667,  
1667. in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

Mr. W. preached his last thursday lecture, 16 Nov. 1665, which was taken in short hand by a hearer, and afterwards published. He also published a tract in London, entitled Helps to Faith.



## SECTION VI.

From the death of Mr. Wilson to the settlement of Messieurs  
Davenport and Allen, embracing the year 1668.

IT may not here be amiss to glance at the condi- SECT. VI.  
tion of the churches in general. The morals of 1668.  
the people,\* it was thought, had lost something of  
the purity, which marked the fathers of Neweng-  
land. This declension from primitive holiness  
was attributed partly to a disrespect for synodical  
decrees, and partly to the inattention of the clergy  
to their pastoral duties. The governour and  
council therefore, in 1668, wrote a serious and  
affectionate letter, addressing it to each minister  
in the colony. It called upon the teachers of re-  
ligion in a solemn manner to guard against the  
slumbers of sloth, and renew their zeal for the  
spiritual improvement of the souls committed to  
their watch, and for the general promotion of  
piety in the land. The measure was well receiv-  
ed, and attended with a beneficial effect.† More  
diligence was observed by pastors in their cate-  
chetical instructions; and a disposition was mani-  
fested to print and circulate books on practical  
piety.

\* Neal i. 368.

† Holmes' Ann. i. 401.



## SECT. VI.

1663.

It was in this year, and with a view to the revival and diffusion of a spirit of piety, that an attempt was made to print an edition of Thomas a Kempis. The design however failed, through an apprehension in the general court, that the book, being written by a papist, might excite a relish for popish principles. Capt. Daniel Gookin and Rev. Jonathan Mitchel, who were licensers of the press, were accordingly ordered by the court to stop the progress of the work: What would be thought, at this day, of a legislature, which should forbid the publication of any one book of any one sect of christians? Indeed a like degree of rigour, at the same point of time, was not exercised in the parent country. But it had grown customary with men, who had fled the tyranny of the lord bishops to practise the tyranny of the lord brethren.\* Intolerance was the order of the day; and the government of each individual church was as eagle eyed in discovering heresy, and sometimes as cruel in punishing it, as the Spanish inquisition.

This truth was disgracefully manifest, about this period, in the sufferings of the baptists. At the very moment, when congregationalists were writhing beneath the lashes of persecution in England, they seemed determined in this country to retaliate vengeance on dissenters from them. This wicked conduct was neither unnoticed nor unproved.† A letter was sent from London to

\* Chalmers i. 392.

† Neal i. 371.



the governour of Massachusetts, signed by Drs. SECT. VI.  
Goodwin and Owen, Messrs. Nye and Caryl, 1668.  
and nine other ministers, entreating him to use his authority for releasing the baptists from prison, and rescuing them from the power of sanguinary laws. But this letter, though penned with moderation and gentleness, and containing the most touching appeals to the heart, made no impression on the congregationalists of Massachusetts. The baptists still groaned in prisons. The most unrighteous laws stared them in the face ; and the most villanous conduct was secretly practised to their mischief.

This treatment of the baptists was comparatively trivial to what the poor quakers endured. They were subjects of reproach, scorn, buffetting, scourges, torture, and death. They were stripped of the clothes, they wore, and robbed of the beds, whereon they lay. The vessels, in which they ate, were forced from them, and their food itself reduced almost to nothing. If any thing in extenuation of this persecuting spirit may be alleged, it is the exceedingly irregular and extravagant behaviour of the sectaries, who kept no terms with decency, and strangely imagined, they were doing God service by violating the rules of good manners.

The church was, for the first time, vacant ; and the desk was supplied by preachers, whom circumstances threw in the way.

Six men. and four women were, this year, admitted to the church, and three male and two female children baptized.





SECT. VI. On the death of Mr. Wilson, the church seem  
1668. to have had no idea of supplying his place by a young man, or a man, who had not been educated in England.

Rev. John Davenport of Newhaven, had formerly exercised his talents in this church, and therefore was not wholly unknown to several of the members. Fame moreover had ever distinguished him among the preachers of this country. He was now seventy years old. At first view, therefore, he would hardly relinquish, at such an age, a place, of which he might be called the planter and patriarch. Those however, who knew all the circumstances of his situation, knew, that he was displeased with the union of Newhaven and Connecticut colonies, and had always manifested a particular attachment to the metropolis of Massachusetts. He was accordingly invited, and he accepted the invitation. Because of his advanced age however, it was thought expedient to unite with him in the care of the church Rev. James Allen. The latter gentleman had been ejected by the Bartholomew act from his living in England, and, for four years, had been a member of First Church. These two gentlemen were installed together, as copastors of the church, on the ninth of December, 1668.



## SECTION VII.

From the settlement of Messrs. Davenport and Allen to the death of the former and the installation of Mr. Oxenbridge. Including the years 1669, 1670.

THE removal of Mr. Davenport was a remarkable event, not only in the history of this church, but in the ecclesiastical history of Massachusetts.\*

It will be recollected, that, in 1662, a synod was holden in Boston, which decreed, that persons, owning the covenant, might have their children baptized, although they did not observe the Lord's-supper. The result of this synod Mr. Wilson had subscribed ; and a neglect to observe it, or a disposition to oppugn it, he considered, in his last days, as one of the lamentable errors of the times. Whether he had particular reference to Mr. Davenport, in uttering this lamentation, cannot now be known. Certain it is, that Mr. Davenport was opposed to this result, when it passed, and published his opinion against it afterwards. But, notwithstanding this church agreed with their late pastor respecting the determinations of the synod, and were therefore widely

SEC. VII.

1669.

\* Trum. i. 484.



SEC. VII. asunder from Mr. D. yet they saw fit to elect  
1669. him, and he to obey their summons. The union  
however was not effected without difficulty.  
There were, at that time, two parties in First  
Church, one of which strongly opposed the  
measure,\* both on account of the age of the can-  
didate, and the rigidity of his sentiments. Mr.  
D. had also to surmount a high bar to his  
removal in the affection of his own church, and  
in their determination to retain him. In this  
situation of affairs, it was not surprising, that  
Mr. D's installation should kindle the flames of  
ecclesiastical contention. Nor was the evil con-  
fined to a small district. Mr. Davenport had  
been considered, as the head of a party more  
strictly calvinian, than the body of the colonists.  
He had also personal friends, and so had the par-  
ty in First Church, who opposed him.

A part of First Church therefore, to the num-  
ber of       , formed a society, which made the  
third congregation in Boston. Seventeen minis-  
ters publicly testified their disapprobation of the  
conduct of the majority of First Church, and es-  
pecially of its three officers, Messrs. Davenport  
and Allen, and elder Penn. It was said, on the  
part of the ministers, that the whole truth respect-  
ing Mr. D's dismissal was never told them ;  
that parts only of letters were read, which ought  
to have been fully exposed ; and that the publick  
were not ingenuously dealt with upon the sub-  
ject. It was denied by Mr. D. and his friends,

\* Hutch. i. 247.



## SEC. VII.

1669.

that the letters concealed would have been evidence, that the church at Newhaven refused a dismissal to her pastor ; but only have shown an unwillingness to make it her immediate act.\* A degree of blame attached to both sides. On one side more simplicity and uprightness of conduct was to have been expected ; and those of the other were too curious and meddlesome. The event was not fortunate for any body. Mr. D. shortly died ; Newhaven church became divided, and long remained destitute of a pastor ; and First Church, besides losing a respectable portion of her members, was engaged, for fourteen years, in a controversy with the New, or Third church. This quarrel is said to have been terminated, in consequence of a danger, which happened to both churches, through an attempt to make an episcopal establishment in the town. From this moment they exerted their joint efforts to oppose the missionaries of the English bishops. At first however, the contention was so sharp, that First Church refused to join in acts of communion with the Third ; and fines, and even imprisonments were, in some instances, the result of a fiery and misdirected zeal.† Mr. Bellingham was now governour ; and, being warmly opposed to the seceders, he called the council together with a view of quashing the design, on the presumption, that the erection of a new edifice would militate with the publick safety. To be sure, the forming

\* Hutch. i. 248.

† Back. i. 388.





SEC. VII. of a new church, at that period, was a design of  
1669. vaster magnitude, than at the present day ; for nearly the whole country were enlisted on one side or the other of this unpleasant warfare. But the council were not equally apprehensive with his excellency of ensuing mischief. The general court at length interfered in favour of First Church, and raised a committee to inquire into those prevailing evils, which were the probable cause of God's displeasure towards our land.\* The following is part of their report. "Declension from the primitive foundation work ; innovation in doctrine and worship, opinion and practice ; an invasion of the rights, liberties, and privileges of churches ; a usurpation of a lordly prelatical power over God's heritage ; a subversion of gospel order ; and all this with a dangerous tendency to the utter devastation of these churches ; turning the pleasant gardens of Christ into a wilderness ; and the inevitable and total extirpation of the principles and pillars of the congregational way ; these are the leaven, the corrupting gangrene, the infecting spreading plague, the provoking image of jealousy set up before the Lord, the accursed thing, which hath provoked divine wrath, and doth further threaten destruction." One seems at a loss, on whom to fix this general invective. It was well understood, at that day, to be aimed at the Third Church, and the ministers consenting to its organization.

\* Hutch. i. 249.



The bitter pill contained in the report produced retchings in the stomach and burnings in the heart. At its next session, the general court was addressed by a portion of the clergy too respectable to be neglected, and in language too solemn and pathetick to be silenced. The deputies were now delicately reminded of the services of the clergy, in the early settlement of the country ; and of the happy union, that subsisted between Moses and Aaron, of whom it was said, that, if the former conducted the people, the latter transported the ark of the covenant. They were assured of the loyalty of the ministers ; of their inflexible regard to the principles of congregationalism ; and of their hatred of disorder and licentiousness. The ministers thought it necessary thus to vindicate themselves from the charge of innovation and apostasy, which had been implied, if not expressed, in the abovementioned report. They insinuated, if they did not feel, that they had suffered from the rage of a party, who had endeavoured to widen, instead of healing, the breach between First and Third Church, and to misrepresent and disguise the business in the view of the community. They hoped, an apology would be readily found for their conduct, if they had erred ; and, if they had been wronged, that their wrongs would be redressed. They concluded with a declaration of the purity of their intentions, and of their wish to resist, if possible, the antiministerial spirit, which was rising and spreading in the country, and which, through the sides of the clergy, was wounding the cause of religion.



## SEC. VII.

1669.

This address made a serious and salutary impression on the court. They saw the necessity of giving it a kind and respectful answer. Having therefore apologized for the imprudent warmth, that might have actuated their body, the preceding year, they proceed to express their wishes for conciliation, equity, and peace. They decreed, that all papers referring to the late unpleasant controversy should be accounted useless; and that no odium ought to rest upon those ministers, who had been instrumental in establishing the Third Church. In doing this, however, care was taken to secure the authority of the magistrates; and due caution was administered against questioning the rectitude of legislative proceedings.

It will hence be seen, what sort of connexion subsisted between the civil and ecclesiastical orders of the state. Various causes operated, at times, to diminish the influence of the christian minister. As new settlements were made, parishes were multiplied. The means of subsistence and of knowledge to the pastors of these little flocks were necessarily narrow; and they not infrequently complained, that they prophesied in sackcloth. Want of knowledge and of wealth was consequently want of power. Yet, with all their poverty and the disadvantages of their situation, they possessed their full share of talents and virtue, and were therefore not to be contemned nor neglected. They remembered the views, which planted Newengland; and, if they had not



the learning, they were still animated with the spirit, of their predecessors. Though the civil-ians of that day acknowledged and revered their piety, yet they provided with a jealous eye against the increase of hierarchical rule. So that the churches, notwithstanding their professions and boast of independency, were actually under a kind of political control ; and, on the contrary, through the influence of the clergy, magistrates, who were annually elected, were occasionally displaced, when they were thought to have infringed against the rights of the church.

SEC. VII.

1669.

The most acrimonious and lasting dispute, which took place between First Church and any of its sisters, on the subject of Mr. Davenport's removal, was that between this and the church at Dedham. Letters are now preserved in First Church records; which mark the heat of the ecclesiastical thermometer, at that disputatious period.

The majority of First Church adhered steadily to their choice of Mr. D. and their attachment to his person. In this agitated condition of things, it was not to be expected, that the church would receive large accessions. In 1669, two men only and six women were received, as members. Twenty male and nineteen female infants, in that year, were baptized. But, after Mr. Oxenbridge was associated in the pastoral care, in the following year, fifty-four persons, thirty-five of whom were women, seated themselves at the Lord's table. In that year also, thirty-one male and twenty-eight female children were baptized.

1670.





## SEC. VII.

1670.

In the preceding year, such was the disturbed condition of the church, that offences were frequently happening, and yet the ancient vigour of administration was impaired. The practice however continued, of excommunicating members for almost all sorts of crimes, and of restoring them to communion, upon manifestations of repentance.

On 12 Feb. 1669, "Edward Ransford and Jacob Eliot were dismissed from the office of deacons for setting their hands, with other brethren, to desire their dismissal from the church; because the church had chosen Mr. Davenport for their pastor."\*

On 29 March, 1670, "at a meeting called about our dissenting brethren, the question, whether the church see light from the word of God to dismiss our dissenting brethren, that desire it, was answered in the negative unanimously.\*

"At a general meeting of the church, on 16 August, 1669, it was voted by the church, that our honoured magistrates do draw up instructions for capt. Clarke to N. Haven, that they might declare the owning of the letter sent from them to this church to be a true dismissal for Mr. Davenport."

"At a meeting of y<sup>e</sup> church : on y<sup>e</sup> 20 : of august : 69 It was voted by y<sup>e</sup> church y<sup>t</sup> maj<sup>r</sup> gen<sup>ll</sup> y<sup>e</sup> elders w capt clark m stoddard

\* First Church Records, p. 31.



and m<sup>r</sup> Cooke do draw up a letter in answer to y<sup>e</sup> SEC VII.  
 letter sent from Dedham church, enquiring after 1670.  
 the proceeding of y<sup>e</sup> church about a letter or let-  
 ters from y<sup>e</sup> church of N. Haven to this church,  
 and to sign it in the name of the church."

" On 25 Aug. 1669, the church met to hear  
 the letter read, that was sent to Dedham, and they  
 did unanimously concur with it, as their own  
 mind."

At a church meeting, on 9 Oct. 1699, " upon  
 hearing the letters read from N. Haven in answer  
 to a letter of two of the elders to them ; it was  
 voted unanimously, that the church doth stand to  
 the former vote and judgment, in the case of the  
 elders, about the extracting the sense of the let-  
 ters dismissive."

These extracts from the records of the church  
 sufficiently show, that she must have been much  
 agitated respecting the affair of Mr. Davenport's  
 removal, and the publick opinion concerning that  
 measure.

The congregation does not appear to have been  
 insensible to the object of religious association.  
 The following vote indicates a laudable concern  
 for the growth of vital religion.

" At a publick church meeting, on the 13th of  
 the 10th mo. 1669, it was agreed on and concluded  
 by a unanimous vote, that the elders should go  
 from house to house to visit the families, and see  
 how they are instructed in the grounds of reli-  
 gion."



## SEC. VII.

1670.

Mr. Davenport died suddenly, on the 11th, according to First Church records, and according to Hutchinson and others, on 15 March, 1670. Although his career in Boston was short and troublous, it had been long and glorious in New-england. Few men were better qualified for planting the gospel in a new world ; and seldom has any man made a happier use of his natural and moral energies. This remark ought to be verified by a biographical sketch of the father of Newhaven.

Rev. John Davenport was born at Coventry, England, in 1597. He was sent to Merton college, in 1613, whence, after two years, he was removed to Magdalen hall, which he left without a degree. By his incessant and successful application he became one of the first of scholars, and by his gravity, warmth, and ease of elocution, one of the most popular of preachers. He early imbibed the sentiments of puritans, and became a minister to a congregation of them in Colman street, London. Such was the spirit of those times, that he was obliged to resign his pastoral charge. In 1633, he retired into Holland, where he became united with a Mr. Paget, whom he opposed, on account of his administering baptism to children indiscriminately. A controversy ensued, which rendered his situation uncomfortable, and he returned to London. It seems, he had formed an acquaintance with Mr. Cotton, previously to his sailing for this country, and now enjoyed the benefit of his correspond-



ence. By the favourable representation, he received of America, he was led to form a connexion with Messrs. Eaton, Hopkins, and other respectable characters, for the purpose of settling in a land so propitious to civil and religious liberty. They arrived, in 1637, when the antinomian controversy was beginning to rage, in which Mr. D. took a decided and useful part. Not finding sufficient room for themselves and their friends in Massachusetts, they made a large purchase between the Connecticut and Hudson rivers, and founded the city of Newhaven, of which Mr. Davenport became the minister.

SEC. VII.

1670.

With the bold, enterprising spirit of a reformer he devoted his time, money, and strength to the acquisition and security of what he believed to be the right of the citizen and the christian. He had an idea, that a reformation was never carried any further, than by primitive reformers. An emigration into this country therefore, in his opinion, afforded the fairest opportunity for the puritans to effectuate their pious and liberal designs.

No man was ever more scrupulously careful in guarding the doors of the church, and none more rigid in his notions of church discipline. Yet he lived to see and lament, that, with all his caution, the hypocritical and vicious would sometimes find their way to the baptismal font, and the communion board. He refused, for example, to baptize children, unless he had evidence, that they were born of christian parents, who regularly walked in all the ordinances of the gospel.





SEC. VII. In the early part of life, he was continually preaching and publishing against what he called promiscuous baptism, and he thought, that God by a particular providence called him into Holland, that he might bear witness against it in a country, where it was generally prevalent. His rigour in this respect caused him both labour and vexation. For even in those days, there were christians, calling themselves orthodox and puritan, who differed concerning what were the requisite qualifications for the initiatory seal. Mr. Cotton said, that a baptismal creed should contain three articles. Mr. Norton was content, that it should contain only one article ; and others were willing, that baptism should be given to children, whose parents made no profession of faith, except what was implied in attending the ordinance. These last contended, that bringing one's child to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ is in very deed one of the most solemn modes of declaring a belief in the gospel, and entering into covenant with God.

In sentiment with Mr. Cotton respecting the civil as well, as religious polity of the bible, he endeavoured a system of order, which should nearly correspond with the hebrew institutes and the usages of the primitive christians. The scheme undoubtedly originated in the best intentions of the heart ; but, in our day, it can hardly be believed, that ethicks, good sense, and knowledge of mankind, such as Cotton and Davenport possessed, should conceive it practicable.



He possessed a large share of personal courage as well, as a literary and religious heroism. His intrepidity saved king Charles's judges,\* who fled to Newhaven, in 1661, and who were hidden in his house, whilst he preached in publick before the pursuers a sermon from the following words. "Take counsel; execute judgment; make thy shadow, as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him, that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee. Moab be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler."†

SEC. VII.

1670.

In private life Mr. Davenport was beneficent, exemplary, amiable; much practising, what he constantly recommended, ejaculatory prayers. On receiving favours, he would resolve to increase his self-examination and watchfulness; and he was wont to repay the ill usage, he met with from enemies, by renewed efforts of kindness to his friends. His piety, prudence, and firmness were the subject of general commendation.

As a scholar, Mr. Davenport was always placed in the first rank. His judgment was profound; and his excursive fancy was guided by a correct taste. Such was the opinion of the Westminster divines of his abilities, that he was invited to a seat in their synod.

He was minister of Newhaven, nearly thirty, and of First Church, not quite two years. He died of an apoplexy, in the 73d year of his age, on 15 March, 1670. His portrait is in the mu-

\* Stiles's Life of the Judges.

† Isai. xvi. 3, 4.



SEC. VII. seum of Yale college. He was author of the  
 1670. following publications.

1. Sermon on 2 Sam. i. 18. 1629.
2. Letter to the Dutch Classis. 1634.
3. Instructions to the elders of the English Church. 1634.
4. Report of some proceedings against John Paget, &c. 1634.
5. Allegations of scripture against baptizing certain infants. 1634.
6. Protestation about the publication of his writings. 1634.
7. Apologetical Reply to answer of W. Best. 1636.
8. Discourse about civil government in new plantations. 1642.
9. Profession of his faith at admission, &c. 1642.
10. Knowledge of Christ, in regard to types, &c. 1653.
11. Messiah come. Sermon. 1653.
12. Saints' Anchor hold in storms, &c. 1661.
13. Election Sermon, 1669.
14. God's call to his people, &c. two fast sermons. 1670.
15. Power of congregational churches, &c. (posthumous.) 1672.

He also wrote a latin letter to the famous Duræus, which the rest of the ministers of Newhaven colony subscribed. He moreover left behind him an exposition on the Canticles in a hundred sheets of small hand writing, which never was published.



## SECTION VIII.

From the settlement of Mr. Oxenbridge, 1671, to his death, 1674.

MR. Oxenbridge and his wife had been admitted members of First Church, on 20 March, 1670, and, on the 10th of the month following, he was unanimously chosen pastor. Whether any formality was observed in his induction into office does not appear. No memorandum of Mr. Davenport's death is to be found in the records, yet the slightest irregularity in any of the members is carefully registered.

SEC. VIII.

1671.

This is evident, that Mr. Oxenbridge was a popular preacher, and that his talents excited a lively attention to religion in the members of the congregation. During his four years' labour in the church, eighty-one persons, fifty-four of whom were females, were admitted to communion. In the same period, ninety-one boys and ninety girls were baptized.

On 10 March, 1672, there was a publick contribution made by the congregation for the use of the college at Cambridge, at the motion of the council, and beside the publick, there was a private subscription, to which many subscribed, and a like subscription was circulated in the country.

1672.





SEC. VIII. The baptists were still persecuted in the colony ;  
 1673. but Allen and Oxenbridge have the merit of giving no countenance to a most unchristian practice.

Rev. John Oxenbridge was born in Daventry, Northamptonshire, England, 30 January, 1609, and educated at Oxford, where he was some time a tutor. Becoming a preacher, in 1633, he went to Bermuda, and assumed the care of a church. He returned to England, about the year 1642, and was pastor of a church in Beverly. Afterwards he became fellow of Eton college. Ejected from his living, in 1662, he travelled to Surinam ; thence to Barbadoes ; and thence, in 1669, to Newengland. He is reckoned by the historians of Boston among the most elegant writers as well, as eloquent preachers of his time. Like his great and good predecessors, he was sincerely attached to the congregational interest ; and the piety, which he cherished at heart, exhibited itself in his habitual conversation. As he was preaching the thursday lecture, 23 December, he was taken suddenly ill, forced to break off his discourse, and carried home, where he languished, till the 28th, when he died. He was buried, on 31st, with great solemnity.\*

1674.

Mr. Oxenbridge was author of the following publications.

1. Double watch word. 1661.
2. Propositions of propagating the gospel in Guiana.
3. Election Sermon, 1671.
4. Seasonable seeking of God.

\* First Church records, p. 37.



## SECTION IX.

From the death of Mr. Oxenbridge, 1674, to the settlement of Mr. Wadsworth, 1696.

**DURING** ten years, the congregation was under the sole care of Mr. Allen. SECT. IX.

1679.

In the year 1679, there was a synod called by the general court, under an apprehension, that the sins of the land loudly cried for the vengeance of heaven. The aspect of publick affairs was indeed portentous ; yet there seem not to have been any uncommon marks of national degeneracy. The ministers however obeyed the summons of the civil authority, and placed at the head of their body Mr. John Sherman and Mr. Urian Oakes. The first question, to which their attention was called, was, " What are the sins, which have provoked the divine anger ?" The second, " What are the means of removing it ?" The synod resulted, and communicated their result to the general court. It pointed out the sins of the times, and depicted in glowing colours the calamities of the country.\* In most churches the covenant was renewed, and in every church some

\* Mather. Hutchinson.



SECT. IX. notice was taken of the Reforming Synod, and of  
 1679. the measures, it recommended, for reviving the power and spirit of religion.

Some indeed questioned the sincerity of the leading men in the country, who were instrumental in convoking the synod. The gay and licentious court of Charles II. could hardly believe, that there were men of piety enough in Newengland, who would take the pains, which were there taken, to promote the practice of sound morality.\*

5 Aug. First Church also did not see the propriety of calling this synod. Yet its leading members could not be accused of being inimical to the interests of truth and religion. On 5 August, the following vote was passed by the church.

“ Voted, upon an order of the general court, to send elders and messengers to a synod to meet, the 24th day in September. Though we do not see light for the calling of a synod at this time ; yet, there being one called, that what good there is or may be encouraged, and evil prevented, by our testimony, we are willing to send our messengers to it ; though, whatever is there determined, we look upon and judge to be no farther binding to us, than the light of God’s words is thereby cleared to our consciences.”†

In this vote is manifest the spirit of liberty, which prevailed, in those days, and which now animates a large majority of the churches in this commonwealth. The members of First Church in particular were uniformly careful to guard the

\* Holmes.

† First Church records, p. 39.



freedom of the brethren against the encroach-  
ments of the civil authority. This assertion will  
be further evident by the subsequent vote, which  
was passed on the same occasion.

SECT. IX.

1679.

“ Voted by this church, 5 Aug. upon an order  
and advice of the magistrates, that all the elders  
of this town might jointly carry on the 5th day  
lecture.”

“ In answer to the motion of the honoured  
magistrates about the lecture ; though, as an in-  
junction, we cannot concur with it, but do hum-  
bly bear our witness against it, as apprehending  
it tending to the infringement of church liberty ;  
yet, if the Lord incline the hearts of the other  
teaching officers of this town to accept the desire  
of our officers to give their assistance with those  
of this church, who shall be desired to carry on  
their fifth day lecture, we are willing to accept  
their help therein.”\*

Sixty-four persons were admitted to communion,  
in this decade of years, thirty-nine of whom were  
females. During the same period, seventy male  
and seventy-seven female children were baptized.

1684.

By recurring to the controversy existing in  
the churches, consequent upon the installation of  
Mr. Davenport, it will be seen, that no harmony  
now subsisted between the First and Third  
Churches. Such a state of ecclesiastical aliena-  
tion, obviously inimical to the cause of religion,  
was secretly lamented by the lovers of peace in  
both societies. It is to the honour of First

1692.

\* First Church records, p 40.





SECT. IX. Church, to whichever party it properly apper-  
1682. tained, that she was prior in her conciliatory  
overtures. The following extracts, which are  
copied exactly from her records, will show the  
formal, cautious, yet frank and generous manner,  
in which the reconciliation was begun and com-  
pleted.

“ At a meeting of the First Church in Boston,  
Apr. 23, 1682.”

“ A motion to the South Church.”

“ Question. Whether you be willing, keep-  
ing the rule in its intireness, and not revoking  
your testimony thereto, with that rule of church  
order, which we have proposed assent unto, and  
is published, as the judgment of the churches of  
Newengland platform of discipline, Chapt. 13th  
throughout, to forgive and forget all offences, as  
respecting ourselves, that, we judge, have justly  
been taken at our dissenting brethren ?

“ Supposing this pass in the Old Church.

“ Question. Will it not be expedient, that it  
be lovingly presented to the dissenting brethren,  
and that society, by a meet person or persons,  
and that they be desired to signify by writing  
their approbation of that rule, and judging any  
deviation from it to be irregular, and, if the re-  
turn be acceptable, that it will be recorded by  
both, in memory of an happy issue of that uncom-  
fortable and long breach, and the beginning of  
our desired peace, which the Lord grant. Amen.”

“ Voted in the affirmative together.”



“ Letter from the Third Church in Boston in SECT. IX.  
return to the above motion.”

1682.

“ Worshipful, reverend, and beloved.”

“ As we cannot but with grief acknowledge the great evil, that there is in divisions from the sad experience, which we have had of the dangerous influence, which the distance betwixt you and us hath had in this land, so we desire heartily to acknowledge the goodness of God in according your hearts to look towards a pacification, and with thankfulness to adopt, at your hands, the kind tender of reconciliation made unto us, to the furthering whereof God forbid that we should wilfully put any obstruction ; we rather desire to put all the hands we have to the accepting of it ; as being sensible of the truth of what is intimated, 2 Sam. ii. 26. That “ if the sword devour forever, it will be bitterness in the end.”

“ As for the condition of accommodation, which hath been presented to us from yourselves by the worshipful Samuel Howell, esq. and the Reverend Mr. Allen, we are fully and freely ready to subscribe it. And, as we have publickly and particularly in the last synod acknowledged the platform of church discipline, which was agreed upon by the elders and messengers of the churches to be for the substance of it orthodox, so we do now in particular approve what we do believe the thirteenth chapter of that book throughout to be according to rule and the mind of God in his word, respecting the case therein treated of, and that any deviation therefrom is irregular, and



SECT. IX. wherein any of our sinful infirmities have been

1682.

grievous to all or any of your church, we ask forgiveness both of God and of yourselves ; and desire daily to pray, "What we know not teach thou us, and if we have done amiss, we will do so no more." For ourselves we are heartily content, that all things, wherein we judge ourselves to have been aggrieved cease [and] be buried in oblivion."

"The God of grace direct you to a good and happy issuing of the great affair, which you have so candidly begun, and cover all the failings of his people under the robe of Christ's righteousness, granting unto us all the blessings of the gospel of peace, and to yourselves the blessedness of peacemakers !"

"So pray, worshipful, reverend, and beloved, your brethren in the lord Jesus Christ,

SAMUEL WILLARD,

in the name and with the free  
and full vote of the brethren  
of the third gathered church  
in Boston.

To the Rev. Mr. James Allen,  
teacher, and Mr. John Wiswall,  
ruling elder, of the first gathered  
church in Boston. These,

To be communicated to the church."

"Letter from the First Church in Boston to the Third."

"At a meeting of the First Church of Christ in Boston, May 7, 1682."

"Honoured, worshipful, reverend, beloved in the Lord."

"We have received your return by the worshipful Mr. John Hull, esquire, and the Reverend



Mr. Samuel Willard to our motion to hear, SECT. IX.  
wherein you express your thankful reception and 1682.  
full concurrence with the condition of accommodation therein mentioned, which we declare to be acceptable to us. And, wherein our sinful infirmities have been grievous to you or any of your church, we mutually ask forgiveness of God and you. And desire all offences, we judge have been given us, may be forgiven and forgotten, desiring to forgive others, even as we believe God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us."

"And we further entreat, that both our motion and your return and this conclusion may be recorded with you, as it shall be with us, in memory of a happy issue of our uncomfortable dispute and the way of our peace."

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you, that which is most well pleasing in his sight."

"So pray, honoured, reverend, beloved, your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

JAMES ALLEN.

JOHN WISWALL."

"With the full and unanimous consent of the brethren."

Whether the growing debilities of Mr. Allen rendered a colleague necessary, whether it was his particular desire, or whether, such being the paucity of preachers in those days, the church thought itself obliged to enlist into its service





SECT IX. every minister, whose assistance might be pro-  
 1682. cured ; several persons, about this time, were  
 invited to cooperate with the incumbent teacher  
 in feeding his flock. A Mr. Sampson Bond, in  
 particular, on the 26th of September of this year,  
 was invited to the office of assistant preacher ; but  
 the vote, for some reason, was never carried into  
 effect.

1684. But, on 3 May, 1684, a measure of this kind  
 was happily effectuated in regard to Rev. Joshua  
 Moody. This gentleman was son of William  
 Moody of Newbury, born in 1632, and was grad-  
 uated at Harvard college, in 1653. In 1660, he  
 was invited to become minister of Portsmouth,  
 where he regularly and faithfully laboured, until,  
 in the month of February,\* in this year, he was  
 violently suspended from office by the tyranny of  
 governour Cranfield. Persecuted in Portsmouth,  
 he fled to Boston, where he was received with  
 open arms by the members of First Church.†

\* Alden's account of Religious Societies in Portsmouth.

† Mr. Moody was invited to the situation, he held in the church,  
 3 May, 1684, as will appear from the following extracts from First  
 Church records.

“ 11, 3 mo. 1684.”

“ At a meeting of the Old Church in Boston.”

“ Q. Brethren, the providence of God having brought Mr. Joshua  
 Moody unto the town under such circumstances, as you know,  
 whether you be willing, that, in the name of the church, he be de-  
 sired, during his abode and residence here, to be constantly helpful  
 to our teacher, Mr. James Allen, in preaching the word of God  
 among us?  
 Voted affirmatively.”

“ The providence of God having cast Rev. Mr. Joshua Moody  
 among us by shutting the door of liberty for his ministry in his own  
 church at Portsmouth, we do earnestly desire, that he would con-  
 stantly exercise ministry with our teacher among us, until he hath



He here commenced his labours under flattering circumstances. The congregation were pleased with him, as a man, as a scholar, and as a theologian. He was so distinguished for his literary and scientific attainments, that, on the death of president Rogers, 2 July, 1684, he was elected his successour. But he preferred his situation, as assistant minister in First Church.\*

SEC. IX.

1684.

The death of Charles II. which took place, on 16 Feb. 1685, and some revolutions in the political order and customs of Massachusetts, consequent on that event, seem to have made no especial change in the ecclesiastical usage of these days. In the following year, when sir Edmund Andros arrived with a commission from king James for the government of Newengland, a more serious apprehension was indulged for the old-fashioned liberty of independent churches. Though all denominations of christians were to be tolerated, yet there was manifested a strong partiality for the church of England. There was, as yet, no episcopal church in Boston; but the liturgy was begun to be read, and the burial service to be used at the interment of the dead. The puritans were alarmed. Half a century before, the introduction of the common prayer book would not have been extremely abhorrent to the feelings of

1685.

1686.

free and open liberty to return to them again, which we express as an explanation of our former vote by our mind therein.

Voted unanimously, as attest,

JAMES ALLEN,

JOHN WISWALL."

\* Belknap's N. Hamp. i. 210. Collections Hist. Society. vi. 5.



## SECT. IX.

1686.

Bostonians. But a variety of circumstances, since that period, had strengthened their antipathies to the episcopal service. Mr. Allen was one of the two thousand ministers, who, in 1662, had, in a manner, been sacrificed by the Bartholomew act. The congregational character with its growth had acquired a respectable degree of independence and hardihood; and the designs and manners of englishmen, arriving from the parent country, as they were not altogether calculated to secure confidence, began to awaken unpleasant suspicions. The presence of the excellent Moodey reminded every one of the imperious and abominable conduct of Cranfield, who had insisted, that the Lord's supper should be administered conformably to the english liturgy, and in no other way; \* and the behaviour of Randolph and Andros wore a similar aspect. In this state of things a meeting was had at Mr. Alden's, at which all the ministers and four of each congregation were present. They had the same impressions respecting the intentions of the governour. They believed, that he purposed making use of a meeting-house for the celebration of publick worship according to the liturgy; and they were agreed in opinion, that they ought to frustrate his purpose. Their counsels however were ineffectual. After viewing the three meeting-houses, the governour determined to make use of the one belonging to the Third, or Old South, society. It was in vain, that the measure

\* Alden's account of Religious Societies in Portsmouth. p. 12.



was deplored by a number of the most respectable proprietors ; that they urged their right to the edifice, and the land, on which it stood, and the cruelty of infringing on their religious immunities. The governour caballed with two or three busybodies, and ordered the sexton of the church to open the doors and ring the bell. The fellow durst not refuse obedience to the first magistrate of the colony ; and the service was performed in the meeting-house agreeably to his wishes.\* This infraction on the rights of congregationalists was perhaps never repeated ; for immediately afterwards the first episcopal society in Boston was instituted, and a church consecrated to the english establishment.†

SECT. IX.

1686.

Joseph Dudley had been president of Massachusetts ; and, although the change, which commenced with his administration, was ominous to the people, yet they had no suspicion of his religious principles.‡ His successour however, sir Edmund Andros, fully opened the eyes of the community to the snares, which were laying for them. Andros considered all congregational clergymen, as laymen. A design was now laid to establish the church of England on the ruins of congregationalism ; and, as a means of carrying this plan into effect, it was intended, that no mar-

1687.

\* Holmes' Annals. i. 469.

† In this year also, was constituted the french protestant society of christians, consisting of pious refugees, who had fled their country, on the revocation of the edict of Nantz. They reared a small brick church in school street.

‡ Hutch. i. 315.





SECT. IX. riages should be legal, which were not solemniz-  
 1687. ed by an episcopal priest. This was not all. The people were threatened with the loss of their meeting-houses. But the terrour of their apprehensions was mitigated by the tolerant proclamation of James ; although there were some of the wisest and best men of the congregational order, who thought, that it smelt of popery, and was the fruit of an artful scheme. Many congregations agreed to address the king, and that of First Church among them.\*

So great were the political agitations of this period, both in England and America, that the voice of religion was, for the most part, silent. The most gloomy fears pervaded the friends of ecclesiastical liberty. They saw the press restrained, the rights of conscience violated, and the most intolerant and tyrannical doctrines openly advocated. It was on this day of darkness, when the possessions and immunities of Newengland were most seriously threatened, that the patriotick and intrepid Mather† secretly sailed for England, and with his own hand presented the complaints of the people to the king against the

1687.     ▪ “ Voted, by unanimous consent of the brethren, that an address should be drawn up to be sent to his majesty in their names to express their humble thankfulness for his gracious declaration of liberty to our consciences, and securing our liberties

6 Nov.

JAMES ALLEN.”

“ Mr. \*\*\*\*\* only moved, that it might be known, what was writ. It was answered, there was a liberty for any, that desired it, to see it at my house ; which satisfied all with the vote forementioned.” First Church records, p. 45.

† Rev. Increase Mather, D. D. President of Harvard college.



government of the province.\* That providence SECT. IX.  
 however, which has ever patronised with peculiar 1689.  
 care the principles and rights of the congrega-  
 tional churches of this country, still favoured  
 their independence on the kingdoms of this  
 world, and, in due time, dispelled their dismal  
 apprehensions.

The fiscal as well, as religious concerns of the society, were now managed entirely by members of the church; and the pastor probably, for the most part, was present and presided. At these meetings, a variety of matters was usually agitated; and provision for the ministry, for the stranger, for the poor, for the reformation of morals, and for the preservation of church property, was often made, at the same meeting, and sometimes almost in the same vote. In a note below the reader may find an illustration of this remark in several examples, which, whilst they develop, are honorary to the ecclesiastical character and customs of the day.†

\* Hutchinson i. 328. Belknap i. 234.

† "July 22, 1691. *Voted*, that our brethren, Mr. Jeremiah Dummer and capt. Pen Townsend do assist the deacons in recovering fourscore pounds of money, due from Mr. Wharton's estate to the church for a parcel of land sold him on fort-hill." pp. 53, 99.

"*Voted*, that the deacons do sell a piece of land near Mr. Valentine's, he is about to buy of them." Ibid.

"*Voted*, that our brethren, major Hutchinson, Mr. Ezekiel Cheevers, Mr. Dummer, Mr. Prout, Mr. Deering debate and prepare an answer for the church to the inquiry of the deacons about the way to pay for the rent of Mr. Moody's house, for the time past, and also to acquaint themselves with the church stock in the deacons' hands; and what is given and fit to be settled on our teaching



## SECT. IX.

1689.

Among the enlightened, bold, and faithful ecclesiasticks of Newengland, in her infantile state, Joshua Moodey, who now, for several years, had adorned the pulpit of First Church, will ever stand in a conspicuous station. It is not wonderful therefore, that the society, which knew his worth, should, on the prospect of losing him, make a formal effort to detain him, as a permanent associate with their present pastor. But there was a probability, that he might return in peace to the people of his former charge. In 1692, this probability became a fact. He resumed in Portsmouth, at the earnest entreaties of his congregation, and by advice of an ecclesiastical council, the functions of an office, which he dearly loved, and to which he was supremely devoted. Yet, though he valued himself chiefly on his labours, as a divine, and though, such was his dili-

1690.

24 Sep.

1692.

officer, to be *without variation*, unless by church consent, and that they assist about ordering the poor." Ibid.

"*Voted*, ten pound a year be allowed to our teacher for his wood at the least." Ibid.

"*Voted*, that each one will endeavour to prevent pollution of the Lord's day by any of their families, and that they will shut up shops, before sundown, on the last day of the week, and bring their children and servants within doors, God assisting." First Church records. p. 53.

"26 July, 1691. *Voted*, upon debate about the poor, that they ought, as town dwellers, to have the benefit of their privilege belonging to the poor of the town under religious government. Is. xlv. 23. and that the deacons only further supply them with further support, as shall be in general directed by the church, and advised by the ruling officers. Gal. vi. 10." Ibid.

3 August 1691. "*Voted*, that our teacher have an hundred and four pound, a year, that is, forty shillings, a week, and ten pound for wood, yearly, and more, as the church is able." Ibid.



gence, as a writer, that, in the course of his ministry, he composed upwards of four thousand sermons, he was not deficient in fulfilling the duties of a neighbour and friend. His integrity and goodness of heart were especially manifest in the affair of witchcraft, which was producing its miseries, about the time of his returning to Piscataqua. A Mrs. English, a well bred, amiable woman, inhabiting Salem village, was accused of witchcraft. Her husband, who was also eminent for his worth and accomplishments, visited her in prison; and therefore he too was accused and imprisoned. On some kind of pretence, they were removed to the jail in Boston, where they were visited by Mr. Moody, who invited them to church, and who preached before them from these words, "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." He meant, that the sacred advice, which he gave, should be liberally understood and followed. He more than assisted them in making the application. He procured the means of their escape and conveyance from Boston to Newyork; wrote letters to governour Fletcher of that place; and secured them a respectable reception and safe retreat. In the following year, Mr. and Mrs. English returned, and ever gratefully and justly ascribed their salvation from the gibbet to the intrepidity and benevolence of Mr. Moody.\* This beneficent man was however a sufferer for his virtue. The prejudices of the times

SECT. IX.

1692.

\* Mr. Bentley's letter to Mr. Alden. See account of Religious Societies in Portsmouth, p.33.





SECT. IX. were against him for the very act of fortitude  
1692. above related ; and he went from Boston with a diminished reputation in the eyes of the multitude. But he had a better testimony in his favour, than that of publick applause, even the witness of a good conscience before God. This heavenly comforter attended him through life, and whispered sweet peace to his departing spirit. His days had been checkered, but their conclusion was serene. He was on a visit to Boston, in the summer of 1697, when he was taken with a sickness, of which he died, on the 4th of July. Dr. Cotton Mather\* preached his funeral sermon, which is preserved in the *Magnalia*, and which represents Mr. Moodey, as having expired in the vigorous faith of beholding that Redeemer, whom he had served in the gospel.

Mr. Moodey published a practical discourse on the benefit of communion, being the substance of several sermons,† in 1685. This was reprinted, in 1746. He also preached and published the election sermon in Massachusetts, for 1692.

From the beginning of 1685 to the close of 1692, there were admitted into First Church one hundred and ten persons, of whom ninety-two were females. In the same time, two hundred and fifteen persons had been baptized, of whom the females were one hundred and eleven.

It is natural, whilst contemplating the concerns of a single church, to glance at the condition of

\* *Magnalia* iv. 192.

† Allen's *Biographical Dictionary*.



the churches in general. But the period, of which we treat, was in every view critical and important. The government and politicks of the country were assuming new forms ; and none could foresee the consequences of the change. It was in this year, that the old charter of Massachusetts gave place to the new, whence the people of the colony were deprived of a portion of their ancient privileges ; though the new did, what the old charter did not, expressly provide for liberty of conscience to all denominations of christians, excepting papists. This year also was marked by various calamities in the natural as well, as civil and ecclesiastical history of America. The floods in Delaware were destructive both of property and of life. An earthquake at Jamaica buried in the ruins of Portroyal two thousand of its citizens ; and three thousand persons more of the white inhabitants of the island were swept away by the pestilence, that followed.\* In New-hampshire the small pox was raging. It was now too, that prodigious stories and appearances of witchcraft were rife ; and the heart of sensibility is distressed in recurring to the delusion, distraction, and bloodguiltiness, of which the country, especially Salem, was the scene.

On 17 July, 1693, Rev. John Bailey, an ejected minister from England, was invited to join his labours with Mr. Allen's in teaching the congregation.† This act does not seem to have passed

1693.

17 July.

\* Holmes' Annals ii. 14.

† Voted, that our teacher do invite Mr. John Bayley to assist him in preaching constantly, while among us, three times in a month, or oftener, if he please. First Church records, p. 54.



SECT. IX. from any necessity, for Mr. Allen was not more, than sixty years of age ; but from a zeal in the society to avail themselves of new light, whenever it was in their power, and also from motives of charity. Here was a good man, who had been persecuted in his native country for his attachment to congregational worship ; and there was a disposition to support the reputation, which Newengland had already acquired, for being the asylum of persecuted christians.

29 Nov. On the 29th of November, in the same year, Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth, who, three years before, had been graduated at Harvard college, was invited to the same office of assistant teacher, once a month.† This vote was renewed three several times ;‡ and the candidate continued to preach, as

29 Nov. † “ Voted, at a meeting of the church at my house, unanimously, that our teacher invite Mr. Wadsworth to assist him constantly, once a month, or any other vacancy in preaching, and any other help, he shall judge needful.” First Church records, p. 54.

1694. ‡ “ It is agreed to and voted by this church, that Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth be desired to continue his ministry among us, once a month ; and at other times, when, by the providence of God, Mr. Bailey is hindered in his work, and our teacher desires it. Hoping, that, in time, there may be such a door open for a manifestation of our mutual closing for further work and service for Christ in this church.” *Ibid.* p. 55.

2 July. “ Voted, at a church meeting, March 19, 1694-5, that we do desire Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth to continue his labours in preaching, once a month, to us ; and at other times, as the works be needed, and he be by our teacher desired ; in order to a teaching officer among us.” *Ibid.*

“ Mr. Wadsworth his answer in writing, which was read to the church, June 23, 1695, in which he accepted their call according to this vote.” *Ibid.*

“ Voted, December 18, 1695. At a church meeting, Whereas Mr. Wadsworth, in his late answer to the church, hath expressed his willingness, (if we continued our affection to him) to the ser-



an assistant, the greater part of the time, until 8 September, 1696, when he was inducted by the neighbouring ministers with a formality, hitherto unpractised in the land.†

SECT. IX.

1696

During the four last years, ending with 1696, eighty persons of the congregation became communicants, sixty-two of whom were females. One hundred and fifty-seven children were baptized, within the same period, of whom eighty-three were boys.

vice of Christ in this church, we do fully and sincerely declare, we continue in the same mind and affection towards him, as formerly ; and do therefore, in order to the fulfilling our desires, request him to come to the town, and live among us ; purposing (God willing) to proceed to his full settlement in office among us, without loss and unreasonable delay, according to the custom of the churches among us.

JAMES ALLEN." *Ibid.*

" 1656, May the 5th, voted at a church meeting, by their own desire, that they do unitedly desire the continuance of Mr. John Bailey in his ministry among us. And also, that the teacher, in their name, advise Mr. Wadsworth to take out his dismission from the church, he belongs to, and join with this church." *Ibid.* p. 56.

June 21, 1696, the name of Benjamin Wadsworth appears among the additions.

" August 9. Voted anew a choice of Mr. Wadsworth to [the] teaching office ; and 8th of September to be the day of ordination. Five neighbour churches to be sent to ; the North and South in Boston, Charlestown, Dorchester, and Roxbury."

" Aug. 30. Voted, that, after Mr Wadsworth's ordination, he shall be declared a pastor to this church." The following is afterwards added in Mr Wadsworth's hand writing. " This vote was executed, 8 Sep. 1696." *Ibid.*

† " I have seen an account," says Mr. Hutchinson, " of an ordination, about the year 1640, of Mr Hooke, at Taunton, then Cohasset, in Plymouth colony, by the schoolmaster and one of the brethren, an husbandman, although Mr. Wilson and Mr. Mather, two ministers, were present. But the general practice was otherwise ; and, at this day, an ordination by the lay brethren, although it might not be condemned, as invalid, yet would be generally disapproved and discountenanced." Hutch. i. 374.





## SECTION X.

From the ordination of Mr. Wadsworth, 8 September, 1696, to that of Mr. Bridge, 10 May, 1705.

SECT. X.

1696.

1697.

FOR a little more than a year, the congregation was under the united care of Messrs. Allen, Bailey, and Wadsworth. But this union was interrupted, near the close of the following year, by the death of Mr. Bailey, who, upwards of four years, had been an assistant to Mr. Allen, and who had endeared himself to all his hearers and acquaintances by a most fervent piety and untired beneficence.† He was born, 24 Feb. 1644, near Blackburn, in Lancashire, England, of a mother, who early dedicated him to the service of God, and carefully instructed him in a knowledge of the scriptures. He was initiated in grammar under an eminent schoolmaster, by the name of Sager, and afterwards taught the higher branches of science and literature by Dr. Harrison, whose life is drawn in the Nonconformist's Memorial.‡ At the age of twenty-two, he began his ministry in Chester, where he stayed a short time only, on account of his congregational principles, and whence he was removed by government to Lancashire jail.

† Mather's Magnalia, iii. 232. ‡ Vol. i. p. 330.



Released from prison, he travelled into Ireland, and took the charge of a congregation in Limerick. He, here laboured for fourteen years, with indefatigable industry and brilliant success. So distinguished was he by his talents and fidelity in office, as to attract the notice of people of the first rank, and to obtain the offer of a deanery and the promise of a bishoprick, on condition of conformity. But neither flattering prospects of fame and opulence, on the one hand, nor the most cruel indignities, on the other, were sufficient to divert his purpose of fulfilling the ministry, which he had received, in the manner corresponding with his notions of evangelical simplicity. Free from factious design, he maintained a straight and fearless course. Though the tenour of his life was blameless, beneficent, and amiable, so that he could go nowhere without finding friends, yet he suffered another most grievous imprisonment for his opinions ; whilst papists, in the same period and region, experienced the blessings of toleration and peace. Said he to his judges, " If I had been drinking, gaming, and carousing with company at a tavern, I presume, my lords, I should not thus have been treated, as an offender. Must praying to God and preaching Christ with a company of christians, who are peaceable, inoffensive, and serviceable to his majesty and the government, as any of his subjects ; must this be considered, as a greater crime ?" The recorder answered, " We will have you to know it is a greater crime."



## SECT. X.

1697.

To this virtuous and suffering nonconformist Newengland at length afforded a covert from the howling and destructive tempest.\* Arriving in this country, in 1683, he was freely indulged by providence, in what he deemed the best of earthly employments, the preaching of the gospel. His discourses were plain, popular, fervent ; calculated rather to compel his hearers into the way of salvation, than to exercise their understandings with his learning and logick, or their imaginations with rhetorical flowers. After the example of the pious Shepard,† he resolved, that the studying of every sermon should cost him tears ; that, before he preached it to others, he would profit by it himself ; and that, in carrying it into the pulpit, he would consider himself, as if going to give an account of his stewardship. His life was such, as showed itself influenced by these resolutions. He was rigidly watchful of his heart, conversation, and actions ; and so tender was his conscience, that sometimes the most innocent indulgences occasioned him regret and disquietude. “ Three things,” he would say, “ I desire to get ; patience under the calamities of life, impatience under its moral infirmities, and earnest longings for the life to come.” The scriptures were dear to him, not only as a professional study, but as a treasury of intellectual wealth to the scholar and of consolation to the pious individual. In one of his letters to a friend he writes, “ How terrible are the threatenings, how precious are the prom-

\* Allen's Biographical Dictionary.

† Rev. Thomas Shepard of Cambridge.



ises, how serious are the precepts, how deep are the prophecies of this holy book !” It was evident from his manner of conducting social prayer, that his heart was in it, and that it was intended to operate, as a rule of life. His addresses to heaven frequently contained the following petition, “ May we not be of the number of them, who live without love, speak without feeling, and act without life.” With great calmness and high hopes, at the age of fifty-four, he terminated his diligent and exemplary course, on sunday, 12 December, 1697, and was interred the thursday following.\*

SECT. X.  
1697.

He published, “ Man’s chief end to glorify God,” a sermon preached at Watertown, 1689, and an address to the people at Limerick, in 1684.†

Dr. Cotton Mather preached his funeral sermon, which has supplied the principal materials to the several notices of his life. He was buried in the cemetery in Common-street, Boston, where many of his descendants have mingled their dust with his. The names of Willis and Belknap mark a number of his posterity in the female line ; and there are now living two of his grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and several of the fifth generation.

The discipline of the church, at this time, seems to have been carefully attended to ;‡

1698.

\* First Chh. R. p. 57.

† New Eng. Biog. Dict.

‡ The following may serve, as a specimen of church censures, at that day, frequently administered. “ \*\*\*\*\* was admonished publicly, Jan. 16, 1698, for begging charity of people for some poor person or persons, as she pretended, yet keeping the most of what she so gathered for her own use. In the management





SECT. X. though it is easy to perceive, that there was a  
 1699. gradual relaxation of the rigour formerly practised.

Ecclesiastical controversy still had its fomenters in the state ; and tracts were frequently appearing in defence of some useless relick of antiquity, or in favour of some silly innovation. The following record, in the hand writing of Mr. Allen, may contribute to show the temper of the times and the sentiments of the church. " Feb. 10,  
 1701. Whereas there is a print lately come forth dedicated to the churches of Christ in New-england, entitled, " Gospel order revived," wherein are harsh expressions and unmeet against the present practice of this church and the professed way of congregational churches therein ; we do herein declare our utter dislike thereof, though we do not condemn those, who conscientiously practise otherwise. And we desire the platform of the church discipline may be reprinted, that those, who are unacquainted with it, may know it, which is the directory of our practice, *so far as it agrees with the word of God.* Voted by a very full consent."\*

There were now probably in the church two hundred communicants. The rules of its discipline were rigid, and commonly observed with exactness. This remark applies with equal truth

of this affair, and discoursing with persons about the same, she was also guilty of sundry abominable lies. She was again restored, Aug. 28, 1698." First Church records, p. 57.

\* First Church records, p. 59.



to all the churches then growing in Newengland. SECT. X.  
1704.  
Our fathers had lost, though somewhat of their learning, yet little of their puritanism. All officers of the church were ordained by prayer and the imposition of hands. The distinction between pastors and teachers, and between elders and deacons, though constantly diminishing, was still regarded. Small deviations from the path of christian sobriety, in the professors of religion, subjected them to the admonition, if not censure of the church, whilst heinous offences were punished with immediate excommunication.\*

During the last eight years, beginning with 1697, one hundred and seventy persons adjoined themselves to the fellowship of the church, sixty-nine of whom were men, and one hundred and one women. Two hundred and ninety-two children had, in the same period, been baptized; one hundred and forty-eight of whom were males, and one hundred and forty-four females.

Mr. Allen, through the infirmities of age, had ceased preaching, in his turn, the thursday lec-

\* This, though a far more frequent punishment, in that day, than this, was viewed, as one of the most terrible of evils. "A law was made, in 1638, that, if any person stood excommunicated, six months, they should be liable to fine, imprisonment, or banishment, as the court of assistants should determine; but this law approached too nigh to the ecclesiastical laws in England, so much complained of, to continue long in force, and, in 1639, it was repealed. But the first laws seem to deprive an excommunicated person, and also a whole church, if separated from the rest, of all civil privileges, although the platform does not suppose deprivation of civil rights and authority to be the necessary consequence, yet even by the platform all others were to "forbear to eat and drink with excommunicated persons." Hutchinson i. 373.



SECT. X. ture,† and rarely took on him any portion of the  
1704. service of the Lord's day. In quest of his successor, the eyes of the church were turned upon Mr. Thomas Bridge, who came to Boston with his family, 17 March, 1704, and who was soon employed, as a probationer for the pastoral office.

† 29 September, 1702. "Voted, that this committee be desired to advise with those ministers, which carry on the weekly lecture in Boston, and with their advice endeavour to supply Mr. Allen's monthly turn in the said lecture." First Church records, p. 98.



## SECTION XI.

From the ordination of Mr. Bridge, 10 May, 1705, to the death of  
Mr. Allen, 22 September, 1710.

ON the tenth of May, 1705, Rev. Thomas Bridge† was regularly installed a colleague pastor with Messrs. Allen and Wadsworth. The church designated the mode of induction, and two of its elders united with the ministers in the imposition of hands.‡

SECT. XI.

1705.

† “An answer to a vote of the First Church of Christ in Boston from Rev. Mr. Thomas Bridge, dated March 31, 1705.”

“Dearly beloved,”

“I have entertained your former invitation, and this also with fear and trembling, being sensible of the greatness of the work, and my manifold infirmities ; but I am not my own ; and my encouragement is, that the grace of Christ is sufficient for me. I have therefore solemnly, freely, and entirely resigned myself up to his dispose, and find satisfaction therein. I bless his glorious name for the acceptance, my labours have found amongst you, and looking upon it, as his work, that your hearts are inclined to give me this call, I therefore thankfully and willingly accept it.” First Church records, p. 88

§ At a meeting of the church, 17 April, called to make the necessary arrangements for ordination, after voting to send for the three churches in Boston, and the churches in Roxbury, Dorchester, Charlestown, and Milton, the brethren proceeded to the assignment of particular services. “Upon the question, who should give the charge to Mr. Bridge, and lay on hands, at his ordination; Resolved by vote, that our teacher Allen should give the charge,





## SECT. XI.

1709.

From 1702 to 1709 the church caused its deacons and committees no small trouble in the management of its real estate. The property in question was a house, lately occupied by Mr. William Persons, some land, which, a short time before, had been given by Mr. Richard Taylor, another parcel of land near Fort-hill, and a house and lot of land, on the south side of Summer-street, called Hollingshead's lot. At a meeting of the brethren, in September, 1702, they determined to sell the first mentioned house, with the land given them by Mr. Taylor, and to retain the Fort-hill land, which had been bargained away, but not paid for, to Mr. Richard Wharton. At a meeting, 7 April, 1709, they agreed to purchase an estate of capt. Balston, in Water-street, at the price of 300*l.* for the use of the ministry, and, at the same time, voted to make sale of Hollingshead's lot. Towards purchasing the place in Water-street, Mr. Dummer generously assisted them by advancing the specie. But the situation not answering expectation, it was voted, at a subsequent meeting, the next year, to sell it.\* At the

and have liberty to desire any ancient elders to pray before and after ; and that the Rev. Mr. Increase Mather and Mr. Samuel Willard be the persons desired to join with our elders to lay on hands."

"Thursday, 10th of May, 1705, the Rev. Mr. Thomas Bridge was ordained a pastor over the First Church of Christ in Boston. Mr. James Allen, teacher, gave him the charge, and layed on hands with elder Bridgham, and elder Cope, or Cobb." F.C.R. p. 188.

\* "At a meeting of the church, at the house of the Rev. Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth, Jan. 5th, 1709-10. On consideration of some inconveniences, attending the situation of the house lately purchased, for the use of the ministry, (at the time not foreseen,) which make it unsuitable for the occasion ; Voted, that the deacons be



same time, they voted to retain the Hollingshead's lot, and to apply the proceeds of the forementioned sale to the building of a suitable house for one of the ministers. This lot is the land, since occupied by Chauncy-place, First Church, and the adjoining block of houses in Summer-street belonging to the society ; and the house, erected in 1710, was the one, in which Drs. Chauncy and Clarke died, and which was taken down, in 1807.

SECT. XI.

1710.

22 September, 1710, died Rev. James Allen, the senior pastor of the church. He came to this country, in 1663, recommended by Mr. Goodwin. He had been a minister in England, and a sufferer by the act of uniformity, passed, 24 August, 1662. He was not violently but steadily the friend of ecclesiastical liberty, and resolutely acted on the following opinion ; “ When the governors of the church impose, as conditions of my communion, things, that are either unlawful in themselves, or that, after due examination, I verily believe, are unlawful, I am bound, in obedience to the authority of Christ, rather to desert

22 Sept.

desired, and hereby are empowered, to make sale of the said house and land, *with the land since added thereto by grant from the town*, to the best profit and advantage they can ; and to execute a sufficient deed or deeds, in due form of law, for passing and conveying the same. Voted in the affirmative. The said Jan. 5, 1709-10, That the money, which shall be produced and raised by the sale of the said house and land, be employed and laid out for the building a convenient suitable house, for the use of the ministry ; to be erected on the church land, known by the name of Hollingshead's lot. Voted in the affirmative, the same time. That the vote lately passed for the disposal of Hollingshead's lot be rescinded and made null. Voted in the affirmative, at the same time.” F. Church records, p. 190.



SECT. XI. that communion, than comply with the terms and  
 1710. conditions of it."†

This opinion does not seem to have been adopted hastily, nor to have been variable in its influence. He was equally moderate and lenient in his concessions to others, on the score of individual freedom, as he was strenuous for the enjoyment of his own rights. He was willing to render to Cæsar all proper tribute ; but he was unwilling, that Cæsar, in the capacity of civil magistrate, should interfere in holy things. The vote of the church, passed, 5 August, 1679,‡ in regard to thursday lecture, verifies this remark. Another vote, in the same year, and likewise penned by Mr. Allen, will serve to show, that he was equally desirous of shielding the church against the power of the clergy, as against that of the civil ruler. There was then, as there commonly is in every period and portion of the church, a number of ministers, who, not contented with the power of doing good, were ambitious of pre-eminence. So synods must be called, and canons ordained for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, and woe to that church, which should dare to dispute the hierarchal authority. It is therefore not a little to the honour of this church, and its aged teacher, that, at so early a period, the vote alluded to should appear in the records.

Mr. Allen had enjoyed a long, virtuous, and happy life of seventy-eight years, forty-six of which, he had been a member, and forty-two, a vigilant ruler and instructor of the church.

† Scott's Christian Life.

‡ See p. 129.



His wealth gave him the power, which he used, as a good bishop, to be hospitable. SECT. XI.

1710.

He published "healthful diet," a sermon ; "Newengland's choicest blessings," an election sermon, 1679 ; "serious advice to delivered ones ;" "man's self reflection a means to further his recovery from his apostasy from God ;" and "two practical discourses."†

His posterity have been respectable in Massachusetts, several of them having been publickly educated, and employed in offices of responsibility. One of them is, at present, a worshipper in First Church.

During the six years, ending in 1710, twenty-four men and sixty-six women had been admitted into the church. In the same space, the number of baptisms was two hundred and two, one hundred and thirteen males, and eighty-nine females.

† American Biographical Dictionary.





## SECTION XII.

From the death of Mr Allen, 22 September, 1710, to that of Mr.  
Bridge, 26 September, 1715.

SEC XII.

1711.  
3 Oct.

THE year 1711 was rendered memorable to the church by the burning of its house of worship. The fire was occasioned by the intemperance and carelessness of a strange woman. Until 1760, it was called the great fire. It consumed the townhouse, all Cornhill, and the greater part of State-street. The loss sustained, through this disastrous circumstance, by the congregation, was greatly alleviated by the kindness of the two neighbouring societies. The members of the Third Church, (Old South,) unanimously voted an offer of their church, for the mutual benefit of both congregations; and generously stipulated a weekly provision for the pastors of the afflicted society. The votes relating to this measure were sent to Messrs. Bridge and Wadsworth, accompanied by the following letter, which embalms in the memory of First Church the piety, good sense, and sympathy of a Pemberton.

“ Boston, October 12, 1711.”

“ Reverend gentlemen,”

“ The church of Christ, which I stand related to, having considered the present dispersion of



your flock, through the holy hand of God, in the late desolation of their meeting-house, thought it a proper and necessary expression of their christian love and regards, to yourselves and flock, to pass the votes, a copy of which I now send you, according to their desire, which you may communicate to your church, if you think proper. The votes were passed with the greatest unanimity and readiness. It will be to the last degree pleasing to us to have the advantage of your gifts and graces in every article desired. The last vote, which invites you to administer the special ordinances with us, in your turns, we hope, will be agreeable to your church; for sure we are, it is a point of fellowship justifiable by the first and strictest principles of these churches."

"The allwise God has holy ends, which he is carrying on by the present dark dispensation your people are under; and, if it may but be serviceable to advance the spirit of unity among these churches of Christ in this town, whereby we shall be better qualified for the society of the assembly of the first born above, we shall all have reason to bless and adore the holy providence of heaven."

"May our gracious God speedily and peaceably repair your desolations, building up and beautifying your church with greater measures of his holy spirit; may all under your charge be your crown and joy in the day of Christ. This, reverend brethren, shall always be the prayer of your affectionate brother,

EBENEZER PEMBERTON."

SEC. XII.

1711.



SEC. XII. "At a meeting of the church in the south part  
1711. of Boston, October 7th, it was voted, that the  
Rev. Mr. Bridge and Mr. Wadsworth, pastors of  
the First Church in Boston, be desired, during  
the present dispersion of their flock, to carry on  
alternately one half of the work of preaching in  
this congregation."

"That the deacons of this church make the  
same weekly allowance to them for this service,  
that they do to our own pastor."

"That the Rev. Mr. Bridge and Mr. Wadsworth be desired also to take their turns in the  
administration of baptism and the Lord's supper  
with us.

EBENEZER PEMBERTON.\*

The following letter, of the same date and purport, from the Fourth Church, (Brattle street,) was communicated, at the same time.

"Boston, October 12, 1711."

"Reverend sirs,"

"I think it meet to acquaint you, that, having stayed our church, the last evening, after the public exercises of worship, there past unanimously the following votes."

"That yourselves be desired, under the present awful Providence, and till it shall please God, that your meeting-house be rebuilt, stately and alternately to be and assist with us in the carrying on the worship of God among us."

"That, out of the contribution weekly collected, three pounds be paid you, every week."

\* First Church records, p. 102.



“ That you be desired, if it may be, for the time you continue with us, to join with us in an equal administration of all ordinances, in particular baptism and the Lord’s supper.”

SEC. XII.

1711.

“ Sirs, these our desires we accompany with our thankful acknowledgements of that good spirit of brotherly affection, wherein you have come among us, and wherewith you have so kindly accepted our bounden christian respects. We ask a further interest in your love and prayers, and hope, it will please God to make your presence and labours with us, from time to time, abundantly serviceable to his own glory, and our spiritual good.”

“ Reverend sirs, your unworthy brother in the ministry of Christ,

BENJAMIN COLMAN.”

“ Reverend Mr. Thomas Bridge,  
and Benjamin Wadsworth, pastors  
of the First Church in Boston.”

Due notice was taken of these expressions of christian sympathy ;\* but whether in the Third or Fourth Church the congregation mostly worshipped is unknown. Mr. Wadsworth preached, the sunday after the conflagration, in the Third Church ; and the sermon delivered, together with the one last preached in the church consumed, and the first preached in the Old Brick, were published in a small volume, a copy of which is in the Theological Library.

\* “ Whereupon the First Church of Christ in Boston, Oct. 12, 1711, voted, that our reverend elders be desired, in the name of his church, to render thanks to the Rev. Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Colman and to their churches for their kind respects to us in their several letters of this date.” First Church records, p. 103.





## SEC. XII.

1712.

During their scattered condition, the church were not inattentive to the rules of ecclesiastical order, and the means of improvement. The liberal christian will read with pleasure the subsequent extracts, and will probably discover in them the seeds of a liberality, which, in regard to the admission of church members, has ever since been spreading and maturing in the churches of Massachusetts.

“ At a church meeting, 29 Feb. 1711-12, the following proposals were voted at the school-house.

“ First Church in Boston proposed to the reverend elders,

“ That, when persons desire admission into the church, they be examined of the nature of a church, of the institution of ordinances and officers, of the authority and rule given by Christ to the elders, of the duty and privilege of the brotherhood.

“ This is to be summarily communicated to the church, together with the relation and belief of the party desiring admission.

“ That no objection be made to the receiving of any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance of sin, and having a measure of scriptural knowledge of the order and government appointed by Christ in his church ; although he have not the persuasion, which others possibly may profess, about some particulars, that are matter of dispute among learned, pious, and holy men.”

From the moment, in which the old meeting-house was burned, the church was diligently em-



ployed in making preparations for a new edifice. SEC. XII.

25 June, 1712, was founded the fabrick of the Old Brick ; and, on 3 May, of the succeeding year, it was appropriated to religious use.† There appears to have been no particular solemnity observed, on entering the church, except on the Lord's day ; but the records of First Church contain a particular account of a day, religiously set apart to the dedication of the Fifth Church, (New North,) which was first entered, as a house of worship, 5 April, 1714. 1713.

On 26 September, 1715, Rev. Thomas Bridge, senior pastor of the church, died. He was in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and the eleventh of his ministry in this church. He was born at Hackney, England ; was regularly educated ; became first a merchant, and afterwards a pious and useful minister of religion.‡ He travelled first into the Mediterranean ; thence to America ; laboriously preached at several of the West India islands ; whence he came to Boston, and was invited to this church. He is represented, as remarkable for his sincerity, meekness, and humility. He was not easily excited ; yet his patriotism was warm ; and he omitted no opportunity to manifest his love for the civil and religious liber- 1715.

† The only durable relic of the Old Brick is deposited in First Church Vestry. It is a thick piece of slate stone, about two feet long, which was taken from under a window, in the second story, on the south side of the church. It contains in two lines the following record.

BURND TO ASHES OCTOBR 3. 1711.  
REBUILDING June 25th 1712.

‡ Eliot's Biog.



SEC. XII. ties of the country. In the unsuccessful expedition, which, in 1707, was made against Portroyal, he was invited to accompany the commissioners. 5 June, the church voted its consent to his compliance. He sailed from Boston, 5 July, and returned, on the 1st of September following.

Mr. Bridge was upright in his dealings, of kind affections, devout in his habits, and irreproachable in his morals.\* Prayer was his gift, and the bible his library ; and so sincere and strong were his expressions of humility, that he frequently kindled a blush on the cheek of the forward young man, and shamed the ambitious out of their love of distinction. He received the degree of master of arts, in 1712, from Harvard college ; and his name is affixed to the class, which was graduated, in 1675. Like his predecessors, Norton, Davenport, and Oxenbridge, he made a sudden exit from the scene of his labours, leaving behind him a name, which is better than precious ointment, and four publications, evincing his concern for the cause of righteousness and the welfare of mankind. 1. "The mind at ease." 2. "What faith can do." 3. "Jethro's counsel." 4. "A sermon before the artillery company." Mr. Bridge's funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Colman ; his remains were treated with particular respect ; and his surviving family, for a long time, receiv-

\* Allen's Biography.



ed the sympathies and support of a generous congregation.†

SEC. XII.

1715.

In the five years, ending with 1715, one hundred and forty-six persons were admitted to communion, ninety-six of whom were females. During the same time, eighty-six boys and ninety-six girls were publickly baptized.

† "The Rev. Mr. Thomas Bridge, a pastor of the Old Church in Boston, died on Sep. 26, 1715, and was buried in Mr. Cotton's tomb, Sept. 29, 1715."

"*Memorandum.* The church, having voted to defray the charge of the Rev. Mr. Bridge's funeral, chose to endeavour it by a publick contribution, on the Lord's day. This was notified, on Oct. 2, that the contribution aforesaid would be expected, on the next sabbath. Accordingly, on the next sabbath, viz. Oct. 9, the contribution was, as one of the deacons told me, one hundred and ten pounds, five shillings and a penny. The funeral charges came to about 104/."

"*Memorandum.* The committee aforesaid ordered Mrs. Bridge, our pastor's relict, forty shillings per week out of the contribution box, for the present, till they should give further order." First Church records, p. 106.





## SECTION XIII.

From the death of Mr. Bridge, 26 September, 1715, to the settlement of Mr. Chauncy, 25 October, 1727.

SEC. XIII.

1717.

EARLY in the year 1717, Mr. Thomas Foxcroft of Cambridge was invited to preach to the society; and the universal approbation, he obtained, placed him a colleague with the surviving pastor, on the 20th of November, in the same year. As a specimen of the composition of a popular young preacher of that day, I have preserved in a note a copy of Mr. Foxcroft's answer\* to the church accepting their invitation to settlement.

\* "Cambridge, March 23, 1717.

"To the Old or First Church in Boston.

"Reverend, honourable, and beloved,

"It hath pleased the great Head of the church (who turneth the hearts of his people, as the rivers of waters, and doth wondrous things, which none can search out the reasons of,) to incline you to make choice of so unfit a person, as myself, to settle in the office of a pastor to this flock. I am deeply sensible, how unworthy I am of the dignity, how every way unequal to the duties of this holy calling, which is of God excellent and difficult. As indeed who are sufficient of these things of themselves? But our sufficiency is of God. Humbly therefore depending upon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, without whom we can do nothing, as having good hope in that sweet promise, Matt. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." I do now with gratitude and humility accept your call, as the voice of God; and do solemnly promise and resolve, if the Lord permit, and account me worthy, putting me into the ministry, to make it the grand study and employment of my life to preach the unsearchable riches of



As is customary, after the settling of a new SEC. XIII.  
pastor, the church had a meeting, in December, 1717.  
elected some new officers, and passed some votes  
respecting their fiscal concerns.†

The independence of congregational churches  
in Boston has been maintained from the begin-  
ning ; and perhaps their freedom will best be

Christ unto you, according to the commandment of the everlasting  
gospel, for the obedience of faith, for the perfecting of the saints,  
for the edifying of the body of Christ, so long as it shall please God  
to continue me among you ; that ye might know the love, which I  
have more abundantly to you all.

And now, under a just view of the importance, weight, and diffi-  
culty of the awful work of watching for souls, and feeding the flock  
of Christ, I beseech you, brethren, that ye strive together with me,  
in your prayers to God for me, that those gifts and graces may be  
multiplied upon me, in the diligent exercise whereof I may ap-  
prove myself a ready scribe, well instructed for the kingdom of  
God, and furnished to every good work ; that I may come unto you  
with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed ; that  
I may find mercy to be faithful to the interest of God's glory, and be  
wise to win souls ; that my service may be accepted of the saints,  
and that I may be unto God a sweet savour in Christ, that so I may  
give up my account with joy to the chief shepherd at his appear-  
ing ; and the Lord grant unto us all, that we may find mercy of the  
Lord in that day.

I am your affectionate

friend and servant,

THOMAS FOXCROFT."

† "At a church meeting, at the meeting-house.

"Voted, that the deacons, for the time being, be desired exactly  
to record, in a book or books, procured at the charge of the church,  
what they receive, from time to time, in their weekly and monthly  
contributions ; and also what they shall receive, at any time, as lega-  
cies or donations to the church ; and that they shall also as plainly  
record in said books, how much and to whom they disburse or pay,  
from time to time ; and also how much and to whom of the poor of  
the church they shall give, as there is occasion, out of the monthly  
contribution ; that so, whenever the church shall see meet to ac-  
quaint themselves with these accounts, the state of their temporal  
affairs may the more clearly and easily appear unto them." First  
Church records, p. 108.



SEC. XIII. preserved by keeping clear of entangling alliances. There is however a partial coalescence  
 1717. between churches, which rather promotes, than hinders, the general objects of religious association. Some congregations, from local proximity, affinity of theological opinions, or other circumstances, are more likely to associate, than others ; but such associations have no effect on the discipline or interior regulations of individual societies. Thus there is a certain indefinable union among all the congregational churches in the metropolis. Their ministers are united in holding an association at each others' houses, every other monday, in supporting a Theological Library,‡ in preaching a weekly lecture, and a quarterly charity lecture ; and the several congregations tacitly agree in attending these lectures and favouring these institutions. The First Church is united with the Fourth, the Second with the Fifth, and the Sixth with the Seventh, in support of a monthly lecture, attended commonly, on the friday, immediately preceding the sunday, on which is celebrated the Lord's supper. The union, for this purpose, between the First and Fourth churches commenced, in the beginning of the year 1720.† The lecture is

‡ This institution, which was founded, 1 June, 1807, invites however, and receives, subscriptions from both clergy and laity of all denominations.

† " The sacrament of the Lord's supper being administered on the first Lord's day of every month, as in our old church, so in that neighbouring one, of which the Rev. Mr. Colman and Cooper are pastors ; their church, by a letter dated January 18, 1719, made a motion to ours, that a lecture, on every friday, in the afternoon



attended in Brattle-street, and preached by the pastors of the two congregations alternately. SEC. XIII.  
1720.

There is indeed no express warrant for such an exercise in the christian scriptures ; and some have doubted the propriety of upholding the custom. They have alleged, that it tends to bring the ordinance of preaching into contempt with some, by making it too frequent, and that its effect is injurious to others, by inducing a belief, that some unusual, peculiar preparation is necessary for commemorating the death of our Saviour. But it ought to be remembered, that an attendance on this lecture is by no means considered an indispensable requisite for communion, on the following sunday ; and that any religious institution, which brings people voluntarily together, naturally expands the mind, and can hardly be unfavourable to the progress of charity. In the case just mentioned, the effect of the lecture has been happy. It has contributed to the harmony of both the ministers and brethren of the two societies.†

In 1725, Mr. Wadsworth was chosen president of Harvard college. His flock parted with him reluctantly, yet amicably, not without deliberation and prayer, yet without the formality of a

1725.

might be attended, in their meeting-house, by these two churches, and the lecture sermons be preached by the ministers of both churches. This letter was read with us, on the Lord's day, Feb. 7, 1719-20, and, after a week's time for consideration, our church, by a (silent) vote, complied with the motion they made to us.

"This vote, was on February 14, 1719-20." First Church Records, p. 110.

† Dr. Thacher's Century Discourse.





§EC. XIII. dismissing council. He continued to preach to  
1725. them in his turn, for some little time, after he was  
installed at Cambridge ; ever afterwards enjoyed  
their friendship ; and, at his death, left a legacy  
for the poor of the church.†

President Wadsworth was born at Milton, in  
1669, and graduated at Harvard college, in 1690.  
He was the first minister of this church educated  
at the neighbouring university. He was the son  
of capt. Samuel Wadsworth, who distinguished  
himself by his courage, and, in 1676, fell a victim  
to the Indian war. The president, with filial pie-  
ty, erected a monument to the bravery of his  
father and his valiant soldiers.\*

The powers of president Wadsworth's mind  
were rather strong, than brilliant ; and his manners  
rather grave, than animated. His memory was  
uncommonly retentive. He could easily quote  
almost any verse in the bible, without recurring  
to the page ; though he wrote his sermons with  
care, he always delivered them memoriter. In  
the office of president of the college, he wanted  
not prudence and fidelity ; but, in bodily stature  
and dignity of deportment, he was inferiour to his  
predecessor Leverett ; nor were his science and  
literature so various and conspicuous, as preemi-  
nently to distinguish him, as the head of the uni-  
versity. Yet he was a practical, useful charac-  
ter. As a preacher, he was perspicuous and sol-  
emn ; as a pastor, watchful and exemplary ; and,  
as a christian, so liberal and exact in his charities,

† F.C. records, p. 412.

\* Holmes's Annals. i. 429.



as to give to the poor a tenth part of his income. SEC. XIII.  
He was author of several publications.\*

1725.

This gentleman was dismissed from his pastoral office, 16 June, 1725, and from the labours of human life, 12 March, 1737, in the 68th year of

- \* 1. An artillery election sermon, 1700.
2. Exhortations to piety, 1702.
3. Three sermons, entitled, Men worse in their carriage to God, than one another; Psalms sung with grace in the heart; A pious tongue an enriching treasure, 1706.
4. Discourses on the day of judgment, 1709.
5. A sermon on assembling at the house of God, 1710.
6. The well-ordered family, 1712.
7. Five sermons, viz. The first, on 30 September, 1711, from Psalm lxxiii. 1. being the last delivered in the old meeting-house, which was burnt, 2 October, 1711. The second, from Lamentations iii. 31. at the south meeting-house in Boston, 7 October, 1711, being the first Lord's day after the fire. The third, on 18 December, 1711, from Psalm xxvi. 8. being a fast kept by the Old Church, occasioned by the burning of their meeting-house. The fourth, on 3 May, 1713, from IIag. ii. 9, being the first in the Brick meeting-house, where the former was burnt. The fifth, on 12 November, 1713, from Zech. iv. 7. A thanksgiving sermon, for God's goodness, in providing a new meeting-house for the Old Church; with a preface, giving some account of the fire, 2 October, 1711.
8. Explanation of the assembly's catechism, 1714.
9. Invitation to the gospel feast, in eleven sermons, 12mo. Saint's prayer to escape temptation; a discourse on the death of Isaac Addington, 1715.
10. Election sermon, 1716.
11. Twelve single sermons on various subjects, 1717.
12. Zeal against flagrant wickedness; essay for spreading the gospel into ignorant places, 1718.
13. Christ's fan in his hand; Imitation of Christ, a christian duty, 1722.
14. A dialogue between a minister and his neighbour, on the Lord's supper, 1724.
15. It is honourable not shameful to suffer, 1725.
16. The benefits of a good, and the mischiefs of an evil conscience, in fourteen sermons; None but the righteous saved, 1725.



SEC. XIII. his age. He was minister of this church, twenty-nine  
 1725. years, and twelve, a president of the university.

17 Aug. Upon the removal of president Wadsworth to Cambridge, a fast was immediately kept by the congregation, and measures were taken to supply the vacancy with another pastor. 12 June, 1727, a choice was made. Of one hundred and ten votes given in for a minister, three were scattered, Mr. Welsted had forty-three, and sixty-four were for Mr. Chauncy, who was declared duly chosen, and who was ordained, on the 25th of October following.\* At a meeting, on the second of that month, the brethren of the church passed a number of votes, preparatory to the ordination, selected their council, and assigned the principal parts of the consecrating service.

1727. During the twelve years, ending with 1727, two hundred and forty-one persons had been admitted into the church, one hundred and fifty-six of whom were females. In the same time, four hundred and seventy-four children were baptized, two hundred and fifty-eight of whom were males.

\* "October 25, 1727, Mr. Chauncy was accordingly ordained, Mr. Wadsworth being sick, and not at the ordination, Mr. Foxcroft began with prayer. Mr. Chauncy preached the sermon from Matt. xxviii. 20. Mr. Thacher prayed after the sermon. Mr. Colman presided, as moderator, in taking the votes, and giving the charge; praying both before and after. Dr. Mather gave the fellowship of the churches." First Church records, 122.



## SECTION XIV.

From the settlement of Mr. Chauncy, 25 October, 1727, to the death of Mr. Foxcroft, 18 June, 1769.

WE have now arrived at a memorable period in the history of First Church. During forty-two years, the present pastors lived in great harmony with each other and their flock ; and, whoever has heard of the Old Brick Church in Boston, will find it associated, in his memory, with the names of Foxcroft and Chauncy. The affairs of the church were now in a flourishing condition. She saw her elder pastor unrivalled in popularity, as a preacher, and already marked, in his young colleague, the dawn of those brilliant powers, which were destined to enlighten and improve the age.

SEC. XIV.  
1728.

It was during the joint ministry of these two men, that the church of England made her most strenuous exertions to introduce the forms of episcopacy into the provinces of Newengland. These attempts were resolutely resisted by the divines of this metropolis, who, in the success of such measures, apprehended an injury to that religious liberty, for which their fathers had abandoned their native country, and encountered the





SEC. XIV. difficulties of planting this western wilderness.

1729.

The ministers of First Church were strongly in this sentiment. The elder of them, Mr. Foxcroft, had been educated in the episcopal church, and was designed for her service. But, from a thorough examination of the principles of christianity, and a research into ecclesiastical history, he became a sincere convert to congregationalism. It was the active influence of this settled opinion, that drew from Mr. Foxcroft, in 1729, a publication, entitled, "the ruling and ordaining power of congregational bishops, or presbyters, defended." This treatise was an answer to Barclay's Persuasive, and was written in so masterly a manner, as to be itself unanswerable. What Mr. Foxcroft was, from principle, Mr. Chauncy was from principle, and from constitution, and from the prejudices of education. His early notions of civil liberty, his theological studies and sentiments, and all the habits of his great mind were opposed to prelatical establishments. Accordingly in the episcopal disputes, as we shall see, which were agitated between 1760 and 1770, he bore a part, that does equal honour to his patriotism and his learning.

1730.

During the united ministry of Foxcroft and Chauncy, several improvements took place in the management of both the spiritual and fiscal concerns of the society. Until now, the church, that is, the male communicants, were alone concerned in fixing the ministers' salaries, and, in short, in making all pecuniary appropriations. But, in this year, it was voted, that, "whenever there is occa-

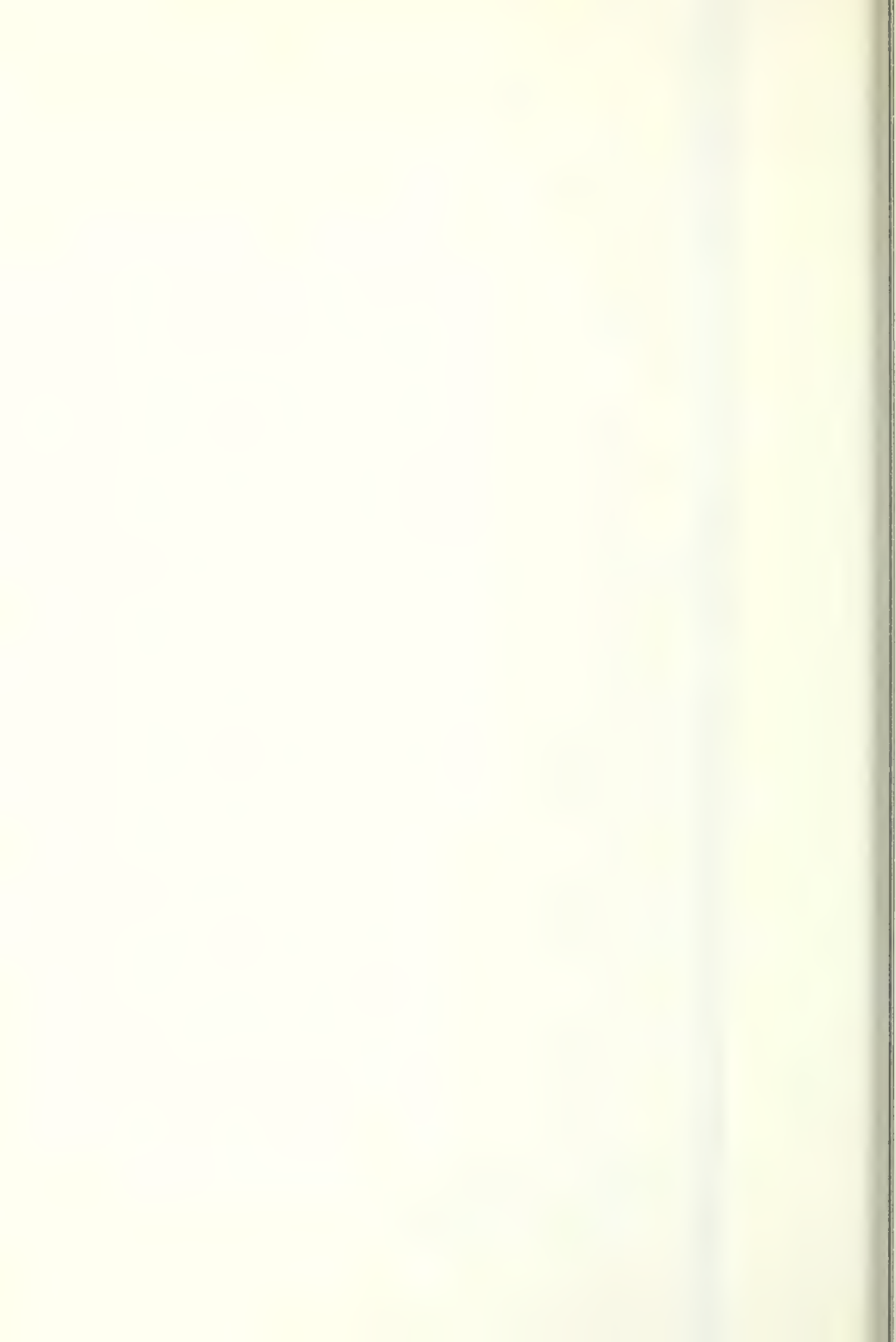


sion for money to be raised, the congregation be notified to meet with the church in the doing of it." SEC. XIV.  
1730.

About this time, the question, relative to the enlargement of baptism, which was agitated, in the year sixteen hundred sixty-two, was again the subject of conversation among the clergy, and of discussion in their churches. At a meeting of First Church, 3 March, the fifth proposition of the result of the synod, in the year above mentioned, was voted to be a rule in the church.\* 1731. At the same time also, was renewed a vote of the church, which passed in January, one thousand six hundred fifty-seven, relative to the discipline to be exercised over the children of church members.

The same subject, in regard to the terms of admitting members, which was considered, in 1712, again solicited the attention of the brethren. Relations of what are called "experiences" were still continued in the church; but the number of those, who disapproved the practice, was greater, than that of its advocates. Accordingly the following question was proposed, 9 June, 1730, which, though not decided immediately, was finally passed in the affirmative. "Whether, in case any particular persons appearing, in a judgment of charity, visible saints, and offering to join with this church in full communion, do seriously scruple the practice of making a relation, as usual at admissions, whether, in such case, it be your mind, that persons shall be left to their christian liberty, and admitted without obliging them to comply with the said custom; provided always,

\* See Sect. IV. p. 92



SEC. XIV. that they do make a publick confession of their  
 1730. faith or belief, and that the elders do declare their having received satisfaction by private examination, as to their knowledge and experiences in religion?"

The salary of the ministers, for several years previous to this period, had been 4*l.* 10*s.* a week,  
 1731. a sum, which was found inadequate to the purpose. Towards the close of this year, several attempts were made to increase it, and, in the beginning of 1732, it was raised to 6*l.*

It was now, that the time of beginning divine service in the afternoon, on sundays, was altered from 2 to 3 o'clock. This measure, which originated in First Church, was concurred in by the churches in the south part of the town.

It was the custom, in the period of which we are writing, for each church in the government to express, in some way, its sense of the doings of every other church. Thus the records of this church contain a particular account of its attention to a pamphlet, written concerning an ecclesiastical dispute at Salem, of so little notoriety, as not to be thought worthy of mention by the historian of that town.\*

\* "*Lord's day evening, March 2, 1734-5.* The brethren of the church were stayed, and received information of a printed pamphlet, entitled, A faithful narrative of the proceedings of the ecclesiastical council convened at Salem, in 1734; occasioned by the scandalous divisions in the first church in that town. Which pamphlet was sent, superscribed to the pastors, to be communicated by a committee of the said council, appointed to prepare a narrative of their proceedings for the press, and, when printed, to communicate the same to the several congregational churches in the province. The matter was left under consideration, for a week."

"*Lord's-day evening, March 9.* The brethren of the church, being stayed after the publick worship, Voted, That they would meet,



It had hitherto also been the usage in this church. SEC. XIV.  
to hold the seats and pews, for the most part, in 1737.

on the next wednesday se'ennight, at 2 o'clock, p. m. in the meeting-house, to have the abovesaid narrative communicated."

"*Wednesday, March 9, 1734-5, 2 o'clock, p. m.* The church met in the meeting-house. Then we proceeded upon the business of the meeting, the communicating of the narrative of the late council at Salem. One of the pastors-read out of it, one hour, and the other, for another hour. Then, the weather being very cold, a motion was made, that we should adjourn to Mr. Jonathan Williams's house, which was voted. And, the brethren immediately repairing thither, we finished reading of the book abovesaid."

"Upon which, among other matters discoursed, a considerable debate was had on the propriety of this church's accepting and approving the result of a council, in which we were not represented by our delegates, nor so much, as invited to be present."

"Then, upon the motion made by sundry, it was Voted, that the affair should lie under consideration; and the meeting was, by vote, adjourned to the first wednesday, in May next, being the 7th day of the month, at 3 o'clock, p. m. in the meeting-house."

Entered pr. T. FOX-CROFT."

"*Wednesday, May 7, 1735.* The church met, by adjournment, upon the Salem affair; but there being but a very small appearance of the brethren, by reason of a town-meeting, this day, it was thought proper to adjourn for some considerable time, by reason of the late surprising turn of affairs in Salem, the aggrieved brethren having claimed to be the majority, and declared themselves to be the first church in Salem. Therefore it was Voted, that this meeting be adjourned to the last wednesday, in June next, being the 25th day, at 3 o'clock, p. m."

"*June 25.* The church met, and, there being but a thin appearance of the brethren, they adjourned to the next sabbath evening, in order to urge and procure a more general attendance."

"*Sabbath evening, June 29.* Church stayed, and adjourned, till to-morrow, at 10 o'clock, a. m."

"*June 30, a. m.* The brethren came together more generally, (between fifty and sixty being present,) and, after a long debate upon the objection, made at the first meeting, and now renewed, Voted, Not to proceed any further, in the consideration of the Salem affair, by a great majority. The question put both affirmatively and negatively." First Church records, pp. 134, 135.

Thus seven meetings of the church were had for the discussion of a question, in which no member had any peculiar concern.





SEC. XIV. common, and to choose a committee, every few  
 1737. years, to seat the meeting-house. This, I believe, is still the practice in most of the religious societies on Connecticut river.\*

Pulpit services were not formerly so frequently exchanged among ministers in the Newengland churches, as at the present day, nor so frequently practised by the united presbyters of this church, as by those, who had no colleagues in the pastoral care. As they advanced in years however, they gladly admitted the occasional labours of other clergymen, not only in the desk, but in the administration of ordinances; yet, it seems, the measure was so novel, that it was thought expedient to sanction its propriety by a vote of the church.†

\* "1691. Nov. 24. Voted, that our brother Parsons, and Sampson Stoddard, and brother Brown do exercise church power in seating persons in the meeting-house."

"April 2, 1713. At a meeting of the church, Voted, that Dr. Cook, colonel Hutchinson, Mr. Addington, Mr. Eliakim Hutcheson, colonel Townsend, Mr. Welsted, Mr. Jeremiah Allen, Mr. Gouch, be seaters of the new meeting-house, now built, and that it be left to their prudence and discretion to dispose of seats and pews, as, they may think, will be most for the good and welfare of the church and congregation." First Chh. R. p. 104.

† "May 2, 1762. After the administration of the ordinance of the supper, this day, I proposed it to the church, in consideration of the Rev. Mr. Foxcroft's being taken off from his publick labours, for the present, and in order to prevent inconveniences, in case of my being indisposed, or occasionally from home, on the Lord's day, that any of our ordained ministers, in regular standing, might, without offence, be desired, agreeably to the platform and the usage of other churches of the congregational denomination in this province, as there was need of it, to administer either of the sacraments, when the church is assembled for publick worship; Voted, without any difficulty or objection, that this proposal be complied with, and that other pastors, in regular standing, may, as there is need of it, administer the Lord's supper to this church, or baptism to their children. CHARLES CHAUNCEY." F.C. Rec.



On 18 June, 1769, died Rev. Thomas Fox-<sup>SEC. XIV.</sup>  
croft, senior pastor of the church. He had lived, <sup>1769.</sup>  
almost seventy-three years, fifty-two of which he  
had spent in the ministry. He was critically  
skilled in the greek language, a theologian of  
some excellence, and the author of many sermons  
in print. The following is the most correct list  
of his publications, I have been able to obtain.

1. A sermon at his own ordination, 1718.
2. A sermon on kindness, 1720.
3. A sermon on the death of his mother, 1721.
4. A sermon on the death of Mr. John Corey, 1722.
5. A sermon on the death of dame Bridget Usher, 1723.
6. A sermon on the death of George I. 1727.
7. A sermon on the death of Hon. Penn Townsend.
8. A sermon on the death of Rev. William Waldron.
9. A sermon on the death of Rev. John Williams, 1729.
10. A sermon on the death of Thomas Blowers.
11. A sermon on the death of Benjamin Wadsworth, 1737.
12. Essay on the state of the dead, 1722.
13. The day of a godly man's death better, &c. 1722.
14. Duty of the godly to be intercessors, &c.
15. Two sermons showing how to begin the year, &c.
16. God's face set against an incorrigible people, 1724.
17. Sermon at the ordination of Rev. John Lowell, 1726.
18. Discourse preparatory to the choice of a minister, 1727.
19. A discourse on death.
20. A discourse on the earthquake.
21. A discourse at the ordination of Rev. John Taylor, 1728.
22. Answer to Mr. T. Barclay's Persuasive, &c. 1729.
23. Century sermon containing history, observations, &c.  
1730.
24. Pleas of gospel impenitents refuted.
25. Divine right of deacons, 1731.
26. Sermon to a young woman, under sentence of death, 1733.
27. A sermon occasioned by the labours and visits of  
Mr. Whitfield, 1740.



- SEC. XIV. 28. A sermon at a private family meeting, 1742.  
 29. An apology for Mr. Whitfield, 1745.  
 1769. 30. Saints' united confession in despair of their own  
 righteousness, 1750.  
 31. Like precious faith obtained by all, &c. 1756.  
 32. Thanksgiving sermon for the conquest of Canada,  
 1760.

In the early part of life, Mr. Foxcroft was a captivating preacher ; but, in the year 1736, he received a paralytick shock, which obscured the lustre of those talents, which, until then, had procured him great and merited applause. He sustained the character of an eminent christian, and religiously performed the duties of the various stations, which he filled.

During these forty-two years, one hundred and eighty-one persons had been admitted members of the church, fifty-three of whom were males, and one hundred and twenty-eight females. In the same time, one thousand and forty-nine children were baptized, five hundred and forty-four of whom were males, and five hundred and five were females.

Other transactions of the church in this period might here be penned ; but it is needless to multiply records, which have no peculiar nor striking characteristic. I therefore drop the chain of ecclesiastical notices, relating to the time of Foxcroft and Chauncy, and enter on a review of the writings, life, and character of the latter,



## SECTION XV.

From the death of Rev. Thomas Foxcroft, 18 June, 1769, to the settlement of Rev. John Clarke, 8 July, 1778.\*

WHERE facts are merely to be recorded, or a concatenation of events related, the plodding pen of industry may execute the task. But fully to develop the powers of a great man, to trace the manner of their edification, and to note at once, sufficiently and impartially, their beneficial influences on the community is an arduous and difficult employment. It is therefore with a trembling hand, that I undertake to sketch the eminent and various merits of the late reverend and learned doctor Chauncy. That this article of biography should not have been finished, as it was begun, by the colleague, whom he elected and loved, my immediate predecessor, I have ever considered a misfortune to the cause of letters and of rational christianity. It is vain however to deplore irremediable evils. I shall now use the best means, I can command, to supply this deficiency, and trust to the good will of my friends, and the superiour diligence of my successors, to correct my mistakes.

The subject of this memoir was born at Boston, 1 January, 1705. He was son of Mr. Charles

\* This section, as will be seen, the author did not live to complete. *Ed.*





SEC. XV. Chauncy, a merchant from England, who was  
1730. the youngest child of Rev. Isaac Chauncy, pastor of a church in London, who was the eldest of six sons of the venerable and reverend Charles Chauncy, formerly president of Harvard college. At the age of seven years, Mr. Chauncy lost his father. Into whose care he then fell, and by whom he was prepared for the university, I have never been able to learn. He entered college, at twelve, and became master of arts, at nineteen years old. But where he resided, and under whose direction he studied, during the time of his leaving college, until he became a preacher, is also unknown.

The time and manner of his induction to the pastoral office have already been noted. Until some time after his ordination, nothing occurred of an extraordinary nature. His early efforts, as a preacher, seem to have excited nothing like rapture in the breasts of his friends, or extreme aversion in the minds of his dissentients.

The first publication of Mr. Chauncy was made, in the fourth year after his settlement. It is on the death of Mrs. Sarah Byefield, which happened, 21 December, 1730. It is prefaced, after the custom of those days, by a dedication of the author to the honourable and bereaved consort, and is founded on that passage in James iv. 14. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth, for a little time, and then vanisheth away." After a short and easy introduction, the author proposes to consider, first, the representation, that is here given us of man's life ;



and, secondly, to show, what influence such a representation ought to have upon us. This clear and happy division of his subject is clearly and happily discussed. There appears no peculiar aptitude in the choice of the text, as the deceased was neither young nor very old. Nor is there any ease of transition between the body of the sermon and the character suffixed. These faults however, if such they may be called, are expiated by the variety of useful reflections, which enrich the discourse.

SEC. XV.

1732.

Early in the year 1732, Mr. Chauncy gave another sermon to the publick, on the subject of early piety, occasioned by the death of Miss Elizabeth Price, a young lady of seventeen years old. The text is Psalm cxix. 9. "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word." A squeamish critick might be as dissatisfied with the choice of his text, as with that of the preceding. But whoever looks for a curious taste, in this writer, respecting words, will surely be disappointed. It was the intention of the preacher to recommend early piety, and to show, that the holy scriptures are the best guide to the performance of that duty. Contrary to the usual manner of funeral discourses, he delineates the character of the deceased under the first head of the discourse.

In the following year, our author published another funeral sermon, occasioned by the death of his friend, judge Byfield. Like his performances in general, it is strongly marked by sincerity.



SEC. XV. ty, piety, and good sense ; but it displays no efforts at fine writing, or an attempt to improve the style of compositions, at that time fashionable. The fact is, Mr. Chauncy had no taste for rhetorical studies. So little versed in poetry was he, that he is said to have wished, somebody would translate the *Paradise Lost* of Milton into prose, that he might understand it. He loved nature, simplicity, and truth, and looked upon the art of rhetoric, rather as an inflamer of the passions and a perverter of reason, than as an instrument of good to mankind. His aversion indeed was so rooted towards the noisy and foaming fanaticks of his time, and his attachment so strong to Taylor, Tillotson, and writers of that stamp, that, in the company of intimate friends, as is reported of him, he would sometimes beseech God never to make him an orator. One of his acquaintances, now living, hearing this report, remarked, that his prayer was unequivocally granted. Yet I have been informed, by one of his hearers, who is an excellent judge of sermons, that Dr. Chauncy was by no means an indifferent speaker, that his emphases were always laid with propriety, often with happy effect ; and that his general manner was that of a plain, earnest preacher, solicitous for the success of his labours. He ordinarily entered on his task, whether of composing or delivery, apparently without much nerve, as a labourer commences his daily toil, uttering a deal of common truths in a common way. But he had always a design, which he kept clearly



and steadily in view, until it was prudently and thoroughly executed.

SECT. XV.

1734.

In 1734, he preached before the ancient and honourable artillery company. The sermon is preserved in the library of the Historical Society, and, like other of his works, reveals a clear head, a full mind, and an honest heart.

The next sermon, published by Mr. Chauncy, was in 1737, on the death of deacon Jonathan Williams. It seems to have been well suited to the occasion, and is written with no small portion of mental vigour.

In 1739, Mr. C. published a sermon on religious compulsion, which is in the Theological Library. It contains the principal arguments, which, in both hemispheres, have often and successfully been used for promoting freedom of inquiry, and the right of private judgment, in matters of religion. At the time however, in which this sermon was delivered, it must have appeared to great advantage, as the arguments against intolerance, here used, were by no means so common, as at this day. In this, as in almost every performance of our author, there is apparently an utter carelessness in the choice of words. He seems habitually to have taken such, as first offered themselves, sufficiently expressive indeed of his ideas, but sometimes such, as no dictionary contained. In this sermon also are urged the usual arguments for attending on the Lord's supper.

In 1741, Mr. C. published a sermon on the death of Mrs. Lucy Waldo, which is in the library of Harvard college.





SEC. XV. In the same year too, he published a sermon on  
1741. the new creature, which I have not been able to find.

He likewise published, in this year, a sermon on an unbridled tongue, which, though not written seemingly with much care, yet contains some eloquent passages. Some persons, not very friendly to our author, have remarked, that he was a proper person to preach against an unbridled tongue, as, from his occasional hastiness and strength of expression, he experimentally knew its disadvantages. But he certainly wrote in the mildest strain; and his most watchful adversaries were never able to detect, in his publications, a single intemperate or unguarded sentence.

1742. In 1742, Mr. C. published a sermon on the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. In this excellent discourse may be found the following sentiment, that the extraordinary effusions of the Holy Ghost did not make the subjects of them better men. This undoubtedly is a correct notion, and had been advanced by Whichcote and other english divines; but it was a novel sentiment among american theologians, when Chauncy uttered it, and would by many be received with distrust, at the present day. At the same time, it is remarkable, that this sermon contains sentiments, which would now be thought calvinistick, and which, one would think, could hardly be reconciled with what is taught in the sermon on the various gifts of ministers.

The last mentioned discourse was preached previously to that upon the Holy Ghost, and pub-



lished, in the same year. It has been said, that, in this discourse, Mr. C. put forth the greatness of his strength. It is a noble effort, and has sentences, and even paragraphs, which would do honour to the understanding and affections of any minister in christendom.

SEC. XV.

1742.

In the same year, 1742, he published a sermon on enthusiasm, which is also one of his powerful and happy productions. It was the first performance, in which he affixed to his name the title of the doctorate in divinity, which he, this year, received from the university of Edinburgh. He was now thirty-seven years of age. The times called for the decision and energies of such a mind, as Chauncy's; and he shrunk not from fulfilling the task, which providence assigned him. A set of fanatical men, at this time, appeared, assuming to themselves the power and right of judging who, among the ministers of Newengland, were converted, and who not. Of these high pretenders to a kind of inspiration, one of the foremost was Mr. James Davenport of Southhold, on Longisland. To this man, whilst on a visit to Boston, Dr. C. addressed a letter of close examination and sharp rebuke, and prefixed it to his sermon on enthusiasm. The doctor's character was now fixed. He had entirely and honourably committed himself to serve the cause of enlightened and pure religion, in opposition to the heats and phrensies, then prevalent in the country. Of course he was denominated, by field preachers and their adherents, the great



SEC. XV. "opposer." Dr. C. was an acute and diligent  
1742. observer of all their movements, and, through numerous and intelligent correspondents, in various parts, came at a perfect knowledge of their intentions, measures, and effects.

1743. With the same design of resisting, if possible, the torrent of fanaticism, which was threatening to overwhelm the country, as that, with which he wrote and published his sermon on "enthusiasm," he published, in this year, an account of the french prophets, in a letter to a friend. Indeed he left no reputable means untried to convince the more intelligent part of the community, that religion consists not in a heated fancy, in a set of ardent phrases, in hearing a multitude of sermons, or merely saying many prayers, but in a pure heart and a beneficent life.

In accomplishing this purpose, the work, which cost him the greatest pains, which made the greatest clamour among the enthusiasts of the day, and which perhaps, at this time, is accounted one of the most powerful antidotes to theological empiricism, in the country, was his "Seasonable thoughts on the state of religion in New-england, a treatise in five parts. I. Faithfully pointing out the things of a bad and dangerous tendency, in the late and present religious appearance in the land. II. Representing the obligations, which lie upon the pastors of these churches in particular, and upon all in general, to use their endeavours to suppress prevailing disorders; with the great danger of a neglect in so



important a matter. III. Opening in many instances, wherein the discouragers of irregularities have been injuriously treated. IV. Shewing what ought to be corrected, or avoided, in testifying against the evil things of the present day. V. Directing our thoughts more positively to what may be judged the best expedients, to promote pure and undefiled religion in these times. With a preface, giving an account of the antinomians, familists, and libertines, who infected these churches, above an hundred years ago; very needful for these days; the like spirit and errors prevailing now; as did then. The whole being intended and calculated to serve the interest of Christ's kingdom."

SEC. XV.

1743.

The title page of this work, which is here carefully copied, sufficiently gives the character of its design. Mr. Whitfield, who visited this country, in 1740, had produced a strong sensation of a religious nature in the people on the seaboard, from Maine to Georgia. This distinguished and very popular man was followed, in his itinerating career, by Messrs. Tennent, Davenport, and others, who had all the zeal of their leader, without his talents, and all his assurance, without his address. The young european methodist had a most sonorous and commanding voice, and this, united with a ready utterance, and captivating attitudes, secured him a world of admirers. The minds of the people became highly excited. They were no longer satisfied with the cool and moderate strain of preaching, practised by the generality of the Newengland ministers. They had gotten a





SEC. XV. taste for a loose, incoherent kind of sermons,  
1743. which contained strong appeals to their imagination and senses. These they must have, and after them they would go. Had the itinerants, who followed, preceded Whitfield, probably the country might have remained quiet. But men, who were incapable of raising the tempest, were able, by means of dust and rubbish, to continue the troubled state of the atmosphere. All the country was agitated. A variety of disorders were the consequence. Some ministers indeed there were, who secretly and openly favoured these, what they called, revivals of religion, and zealously cooperated with Mr. Whitfield and his friends, invited them into their pulpits, and either published or wrote in their behalf. Among the clergy of this description were Messrs. Moodey of York, Emerson of Malden, and Bliss of Concord. The first was great-grandfather, the two last grandfathers of the writer of this tract. Many there were, who, though dissatisfied with the conduct of these itinerants, yet durst not openly condemn it. Their opposition was secret; for fear of the people. But others came forward manfully, in defence of what they deemed rational and true religion, and testified their disapprobation of the prevalent disorders of the day. At the head of this class was Dr. Chauncy; and the principal engine, he constructed for the purpose, was the work now under notice.

The story of the early spread of antinomianism in this country, with which he introduces the work, is interesting to every lover of american



history as well, as to divines. He could hardly have better described, with the aid of inspiration, the temper and conduct of modern enthusiasts, than he has described them, in the practice of the antinomians of his own days. Thoroughly understanding the temper of his opponents, he knew what, and how much, to concede to them. He was familiar with their pretences and devices, and frequently detected them in errors, where they felt themselves safe.

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1743.

In p. 252, he gives a specimen of his power of sarcasm, which is nowise contemptible. It was urged by the friends of Mr. Whitfield, that "there is no good effect of the preaching of unconverted ministers." "If by unconverted ministers," says Dr. C. "be meant such, as have been guilty of the most filthy uncleanness, under the highest aggravations, the preaching of such has not been without good effect, even according to the mind of those, who make this objection. For, it is generally known of a famous preacher, horribly guilty in this kind, and proved to have been so, and deposed from the ministry on this account, that the effect of his preaching, in the extraordinaries of the present day, equalled, for a time, all that the most noted among our new preachers could pretend to. He so preached, as to be flocked after by multitudes of all sorts, and, so far as shrieking, and screaming, and falling down, and being in agonies of distress, or raptures of joy, are a sign of the good effect of preaching, he might compare with any for the evidences of it. But he was a converted minister



SEC. XV. in the opinion of the people ; and there have not  
1748. been, it is true, these extraordinaries following  
the word preached by those, called unconverted,  
though they hope, notwithstanding, they have not  
laboured altogether in vain."

The first part of this work is that, which cost its author the most labour, and which left the deepest impression. It was to expose, in a strong light, the error of many prevalent doctrines, and the falsehood of many round assertions, which were continually in the mouths of the fanatical tribe. To this end he made copious extracts from Baxter, Gurnall, Stillingfleet, and even Flavel ; and, out of the mouths of these pious and orthodox divines, condemned their extravagant rantings and abominable censoriousness.

These rantings and censures and irregular preachings of the itinerants, and the swoonings and screams of their converts, were acknowledged, by the sober part of the christian community, to be imprudencies. But the Dr. superiour to hypocrisy, and fearless of the wrath of his adversaries, insisted on coming out and calling them by their right name, " things of a bad and dangerous tendency."

It was alleged by the new converts of that day, and by their friends, that too much was expected of them. Dr. C. replied, that it was not expected, they would act like angels ; but it was expected, they would act like rational beings.

President Edwards stated, that, " as the influences of the Spirit were new and extraordinary, so it was to be expected, that those, who were the



subjects of them, would be likely to run into ex- SEC. XV.  
travagance." Dr. C. replies, "The pretence, that 1743.  
they are new and extraordinary, will not do.  
The true account to be given of the prevalent  
mistakes is not their newness ; but a notorious  
error, as to the way and manner of judging in  
this matter." President E. still urged, that,  
"under lively impressions of the Spirit's influ-  
ence, persons would be likely to speak and act  
with great earnestness and vigour," &c. Dr. C.  
answers, "Occasional excesses and weakness are  
to be overlooked ; but the wonder is, how an ex-  
traordinary discovery of the greatness and excel-  
lency of God, the importance of eternal things,  
the preciousness of souls, and the danger of their  
perishing, should make men vain and conceited,  
full of themselves, and apt to throw contempt  
upon others."

President Edwards remarks, "It is no wonder,  
if we have some irregularities, because Satan ex-  
erts himself now more powerfully, than ever."  
Dr. C. concedes readily, "that Satan has had a  
great hand in fomenting these disorders, and  
therefore thinks, that, instead of contriving excu-  
ses for them, they and their author ought to be  
resisted more courageously."

Having prepared the way, in the first part of  
his work, by stating distinctly, what things were  
of a bad and dangerous tendency, and proving,  
that they were so, our author proceeds, in the  
conclusion, to call upon christians in general, and  
christian ministers in particular, for their indus-  
trious aid in the suppression of these disorders.





SEC. XV. He exhorts them not to be deterred by idle fears, nor reproaches, nor any sort of injurious treatment, from correcting as far, as may be in their power, what ought to be corrected, and avoiding what ought to be avoided. Whatever may be the theological sentiments of the reader of this book, he will acknowledge, if he be a man of discernment, that it develops strong powers of reasoning, and an intimate acquaintance with the religious condition of the country, at the time of its publication. Of course it had a most extensive circulation ; it is in the library of almost every american divine ; and, even now, perused with pleasure and improvement by all the lovers of rational religion.

1744. In 1744, Dr. Chauncy published a sermon, which he delivered at the installation of Mr. Thomas Frink, on 1 Tim. iv. 16. "Take heed unto thyself and to thy doctrine ; and continue in them ; for, in doing this, thou shalt save both thyself and them, that hear thee." Without any exordium, he comes directly upon the subject, and first describes the duty of ministers to take heed to themselves and their doctrine ; and, secondly, enforces the powerful motive, suggested by the text. His great object is to be useful ; and, that he may be useful, he takes care to be intelligible. With all his zeal against falsehood, he proposes truth in an unobtrusive manner, and endeavours to expose the errors of fanatics, without injuring their feelings.

In the same year, he preached the convention sermon before the congregational ministers of



Massachusetts. In this masterly performance, he cautions his brethren in the ministry against the occasions of contempt from those words in Titus ii. 15. "Let no man despise thee." Well aware of the power of opinion, he urges on ministers the importance of securing it in their favour, that they may be useful in the world. "Are we content," says he, "to live useless? Are we willing to go on in a round of attending the duties of our calling, and do no good?" With great plainness and pungency he presses home his subject upon the consciences of his hearers, and leaves this impression upon the mind of his reader, that, whether the author himself were loved or hated, he could not be despised.

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1744.

In the same year, the Dr. addressed a letter to Rev. George Whitfield, publicly calling on him to defend his conduct, or confess his faults.

In 1745, he addressed a second letter to the same person. I have never seen either of these performances; but it is thought, that the exertions of Dr. C. in opposing the fanaticism, excited by Mr. W. and others, were serviceable to the cause of rational religion.

1745.

In the last mentioned year also, he gave to the publick a sermon, which he preached, on a day of thanksgiving, appointed in grateful and pious commemoration of the reduction of Cape Breton.

Another sermon, this year, he published on the death of Mr. Cornelius Thayer, one of the deacons of his church. So he took for his subject the character of Cornelius, and for his text, the notice taken of him in Acts x. 1, 2. It is a plain,



SEN. XV. sensible discourse, written with no art and little  
 1745 effort, yet instructive and consolatory. In describing the character of Cornelius, the Dr. says, "What he gave away in alms to the poor was his own, not the property of his creditors. He did not defraud one man, that he might exercise charity towards another ; much less did he think of atoning for his injustice by being bountiful to the necessitous."

1746. On 6 February, 1746, the Dr. preached the thursday lecture, and prepared a discourse on the existing rebellion, in favour of the pretender, which was soon afterwards published. It contains an historical account of that event, and is enriched with valuable notes. After discussing the passage of scripture, selected as the text, he applies the subject to the political event, which had created a strong sensation through every part of the kingdom. He first takes notice of the design, formed against the king and the nation, then represents it, as altogether nefarious, in its natural tendency and moral aspects, and lastly encourages his hearers to hope, that so wicked a plot will be frustrated by a God of order and righteousness. Throughout the discourse, the author shows himself to be a true patriot as well, as a good christian ; and that he had carefully attended to both the politicks and the religion of his country.

1747. In 1747, Dr. C. preached the election sermon, His text is 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. In this, as in every discourse, our author comes almost immediately to the main object, which he has in view. He never fatigues his hearer with a tedious introduc-



tion, which, for any connexion it holds with the subject, might as well have been omitted, as delivered ; but usually prefaces the statement of his design with a few pertinent and luminous remarks. The plan of this discourse is to show, I. " There is a certain order among mankind, according to which, some are intrusted with power to rule over others. II. Those, who rule over others, must be just, ruling in the fear of God." The former of these heads he speedily and properly despatches. Under the latter, he distinctly notices the various instances, which demand the interposition of an equitable ruler. They must be just in their private capacity, just in the use of their power, in the laws, by which they govern, in the execution of those laws, in the payment of debts due from the publick, in maintaining the liberties and privileges of the subject, in defending the state, and preserving its peace and safety, and, finally, in promoting the general welfare and prosperity of a people. In dilating on that topick, in which the Dr. said, that rulers ought to be just " in maintaining the liberties and privileges of the subject," he takes occasion to plead the cause of his professional brethren, who had suffered severely, through the fluctuations of the medium. He then enforces upon rulers the duty of equity, upon a principle of piety, and exhibits the certainty, uniformity, and excellence of that principle, in a very striking point of light. The whole is closed with addresses to both rulers and people, on the subject of righteousness between man and man, in such pungent language, as

SEC. XV.

1747.





SEC. XV. could not fail of producing an extraordinary effect. "And will you," says the Dr. "our honoured rulers, by any positive acts, or faulty neglects, suffer yourselves to be instrumental in the continuance of such a state of things? God forbid! You are, my fathers, accountable to that God, whose throne is in the heavens, in common with other men. And his eyes behold your conduct in your publick capacity; and he sees and observes it, not merely as a spectator, but an almighty righteous judge; one, who enters all upon record, in order to a reckoning day. And a day is coming, it lingers not, when you shall all stand upon a level with the meanest subjects, before the tremendous bar of the righteous judge of all the earth, and be called upon to render an account, not only of your private life, but of your whole management, as intrusted with the concerns of this people."

This is a specimen of a strain, long continued, in which the Dr. reproved many of his hearers, for legislating in a manner, which injured excessively the morals of the province. Some indeed were so piqued on the occasion, that they hesitated and debated in court, whether, according to custom, they should print the sermon. Of this fact Dr. C. was informed. He sharply replied, "It shall be printed, whether the general court print it or not. And do you, sir," addressing himself to his informant, "say from me, that, if I wanted to initiate and instruct a person into all kinds of iniquity and double dealing, I would send him to our general court."



Such was the righteous zeal of a man, whose indignation against wrong could never be suppressed ; and whose lofty sense of right nothing could bring down ; who had no sympathy for knaves and hypocrites ; who loved and cherished the civil and religious liberties of his country with an ardour bordering on enthusiasm ; who was never carried away by a wild imagination, or weak credulity ; who was conversant rather with facts, than fables, with principles, than feelings, and with arguments, than words. If this man had not taste, it was the fault of his age, or of his education ; there was no deficiency in intellect or feeling. He had a fair, sound, well balanced mind, which saw every thing through a correct medium, and reported truly the results of its investigations.

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1747.

In 1749, Mrs. Anna Foxcroft, wife of Rev. T. Foxcroft, died. Dr. C. preached and published a sermon from those words in Rev. xiv. 13. " I heard a voice," &c. He first describes the persons, pronounced blessed ; then notices the time, when their blessedness begins ; and, lastly, specifies the instances, in which they are blessed. The application to the case of the deceased is respectful to her memory and the feelings of survivors. It is said, that Dr. C. believed in a quiescent state of the soul, between death and the resurrection. The contrary would be thought his opinion from perusing this discourse.

1749.

About the year 1750, there was formed a society for encouraging industry, and employing the poor. Before this society Dr. Chauncy, in

1752.



SEC. XV. 1752, preached a sermon from 2 Thess. iii. 10.

1752.

“ This we commanded you, that, if any would not work, neither should he eat.” The Dr. first ascertains the sense of the command ; in the next place, justifies ; and, lastly, applies it. It is a good sermon, and shows him to be well acquainted with human nature, and firmly attached to the welfare of the political community, to which he belonged.

1754.

In 1754, Dr. C. published a sermon on the horrid nature and enormous guilt of murder, which he had preached, at the thursday lecture, the day, when a malefactor was executed. He first explains the crime of murder, excepting from it accidental killing, killing in self-defence, in just and necessary war, and those, who are sentenced to die by the laws of the country ; and, secondly, enforces the command in the text. He represents, in strong and lively colours, the guilt of the sin, of which he speaks, and is more pathetick and animated, than usual, in the close of the discourse.

In this, as in every small as well, as larger work of Dr. C. it is worthy of observation to see, how desirous he is, to be useful. You find him ever endeavouring, by his labours, to increase, both his own and his neighbour's activity ; to multiply instruments of light and comfort to mankind ; and to promote, in himself and others, a useful and beneficent life.

1755.

On the morning of 18 November, 1755, the inhabitants of Boston, and of all the northern and middle states of North America, were surprised



with the most violent shock of an earthquake, that ever was experienced, in this part of the world. Many houses were shattered, hundreds of chimnies were thrown down, walls broken, and huge chasms made in various parts of the earth. It lasted, about three minutes. On the sunday following this terrible event, the Dr. preached a sermon from Job ix. 5. 6. on earthquakes being a token of the divine anger. He shows, first, that these convulsions proceed from the First Cause ; and, secondly, that he ordinarily causes them, in testimony of his righteous anger. In dilating upon the second part of the subject, he takes notice of those sins, which may have provoked the anger of God, and particularizes uncleanness, sabbath-breaking, pride, unrighteousness, drunkenness, enmity to Christ, and ill-treatment of him.

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1755.

In the same year, he published a letter, relating to the Ohio defeat. It appears to have been written to a friend in England, where it was reprinted. Dr. C. proves himself to have been well acquainted with the american politicks of his own times, and a warm defender of the honour of Newengland.

He wrote also, this year, a particular narrative of the defeat of the french army, at lake George, in a letter to a friend.

In 1756, Dr. C. preached and published a sermon, on the earthquakes in Spain, entitled, " The earth delivered from the curse, to which it is at present subjected," from those words, in Rev. xxii. 3. " And there shall be no more curse." This sermon contains a good variety of sentiment as well, as of curious theological speculation. The





SEC. XV.

1756.

Dr. thought, with most of the divines of his day, that the earth underwent a great alteration, in consequence of the fall of Adam ; and, to the present disordered and troublous condition of our world, he opposes that paradisaical state, in which man no longer shall be a sufferer. He is of opinion, that the seasons, soil, climate, and bowels of the earth have all been cursed in such a manner, as to be different from what they were before the lapse of Adam, and that the whole constitution of nature has been changed for the worse. The final cause of this curse, he believes, to be the ultimate good of mankind. And, having served the generations, as a scene of trial, he holds, that it will revert to its pristine order, beauty, and loveliness, and be the heavenly residence of virtuous men. Having quoted a number of texts in support of this hypothesis, he concludes, " It should seem very plain therefore, that the new heavens and new earth, so particularly spoken of, both by the apostle Peter, and the apostle John, are this world of ours brought back to its paradisaick state, or one that is better ; and that the very world, we now live in, thus changed and made new, is the place, where good men, after the resurrection and judgment, shall live and reign with Christ forever and ever."

1757.

In 1757, Dr. C. published the sermon, which he preached, the sunday after the death of Mr. Edward Gray. The subject is " Deeds of charity rewarded at the judgment day with everlasting blessedness." And the text is Matt. xxv. 34, 35, 40. It is a plain, sensible discourse, but undoubtedly written *calamo currente*.



The next publication of Dr. C. which arrests SECT. XV.  
and is well worthy of notice, is "The validity of 1762.  
presbyterian ordination asserted and maintained. A discourse, delivered at the anniversary Dudleian lecture, at Harvard college in Cambridge, New-england, 12 May, 1762. With an appendix, giving a brief historical account of the epistles ascribed to Ignatius; and exhibiting some of the many reasons, why they ought not to be depended on, as his uncorrupted works."

He states in this discourse the things, in which congregationalists agree with episcopalians. All are agreed, that it is the will of Christ, that an order of ministers should be continued upon earth; that none unqualified should assume the pastoral office; that, in the investiture of office, certain forms should be observed; and that the act of investiture should be performed by those and those only, who are authorized to perform it. Then comes the consideration of the grand question, Who those officers are? The episcopalians, on their part, contend, that there were, from the beginning, two orders of christian ministers, bishops and presbyters, and that the former of these only had, and ought to have, the power of ordination. Dr. C. on the part of congregationalists affirms, that Jesus appointed and designed, that there should be one order only of christian ministers, and that the terms *bishops* and *presbyters* are used synonymously in the christian scriptures and in the writings of the christian fathers of the two, certainly, if not three first centuries. After learnedly discussing the subject, he concludes,



SEC. XV. "I trust, I may now say, it has been made sufficiently clear, from the positive evidence, that has been exhibited in the former part of this discourse, and from its not being invalidated, but rather strengthened, by the counter-evidence we have examined in the latter part, that the power of ordination was not deposited in the hands of bishops, as distinguished from presbyters; but that bishops or presbyters, meaning by these terms one and the same order of officers, were vested with power to ordain in the church of Christ; and consequently that ordination by a council of presbyters, as practised by these churches, is valid to all the ends of the gospel-ministry."

1762.

To this valuable sermon is added a still more valuable appendix, in which the Dr. abundantly proves, that the reputed epistles of St. Ignatius are entitled to no credit in settling the dispute between episcopalians and presbyterians.

The next sermon published by the Dr. was the one, which he preached at the ordination of Rev. Joseph Bowman, missionary to the mohawk indians. The dedication is to the marquis of Lothian, and written with more elegance, in point of style, than usually marks the writings of our author. The title of this discourse is, "All nations blessed in Christ." And here is discernible, for the first time, a glimpse of that scheme of universal salvation, for which Dr. C. was so abused by some, and celebrated by others. He says, in his sermon, p. 20. "And can it be supposed, when the promise is thus gloriously exten-



sive, as to its object, that a few only will be blessed, in consequence of it ?” The three things, of which he particularly treats, are the *seed*, in whom this promise is made, the just import of the blessing promised, and the extent of that promise. He has two curious notes, in which he delivers some sentiments in regard to the indians of this country, which were, at that time, and are still, unfashionable. He thinks, that they ought to be christianized, without being civilized ; and, that all our efforts at education and evangelizing, instead of educating indian youths among ourselves, should be made upon them in their own country.

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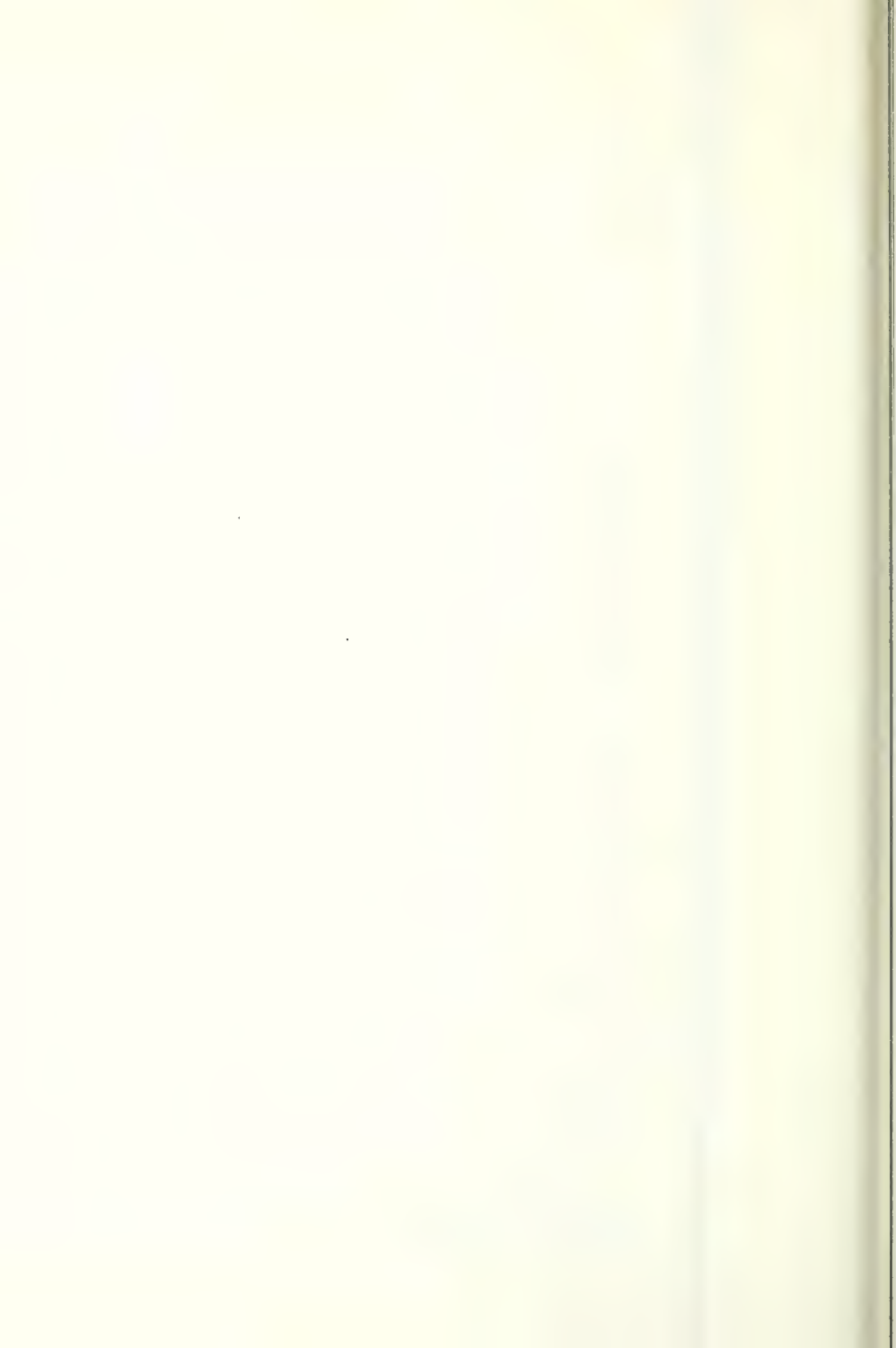
1762.

In 1765, Dr. C. published twelve sermons, relating to Sandemanians. The first sermon is on Gal. ii. 16. “ Knowing, that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law ; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” This is the text. The sermon begins thus. “ The first and last clause in this verse are express in affirming negatively,” &c. Rev. J. Condy, when these sermons were first published, took them up in a bookseller’s shop, and, on reading these words, laid them down, saying he was satisfied ; he wished to read no more of these affirmative negations.

1765.

Notwithstanding however the inelegant commencement of the sermons, they make a work, every way creditable to the talents of their author. Dr. Eliot, a contemporary with Dr. Chauncy,





SEC. XV. said, on reading these discourses, that, much as  
1765. he was acquainted with Dr. C.'s powers, he was  
astonished at the production.

In the first discourse he proves, that justification is impossible by the works of the law. After explaining the words *justify*, and *works of the law*, he proceeds to his proofs. "To justify," he says, "is not to make just, as to sanctify is to make holy ;" but "it is to account or adjudge, as just." By "works of the law" are sometimes meant the law of natural religion, sometimes the law of divine revelation, and again the law ritual ordained by Moses. His object is then to show, that, in whatever sense the word *law* is understood, it is impossible to comply fully with its requisitions ; that God never intended to judge any of his lapsed offspring by the rigours of law ; that he always meant to be merciful to the creatures, he had made ; and that it is only on the compassionate terms of the gospel, that any of the children of Adam will ever be saved.

The second discourse, on the same text, is occupied in answering the question, "Wherefore then serveth the law ?"

It was given, because of transgressions, because mankind had obscured the light of reason, and to prevent the utter loss of all distinction between virtue and vice.

It was added, because of transgressions, that the Jews might have a certain rule of duty, and that by knowledge of law they might have a knowledge of sin.

It was added, that the malignity of sin might be more apparent.



It was added, in fine, that the Jews might be excited to repentance, and to accept the pardon, proffered them in the revelation of grace.

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1765.

The moral law as well, as the jewish ceremonies, was designed, as a schoolmaster to bring the Jews to Christ. It led them to a knowledge of sin, to discipline their hearts and minds, and trained them to those dispositions and habits, which the gospel was to promulgate, to cherish, and ripen.

The third discourse, which is on the same text, proposes to ascertain the nature of justifying faith.

“Faith,” says the Dr. “herein differs from knowledge. Faith is the mind’s assent upon testimony, and upon the testimony of God, if the faith is christian. Knowledge is an assent grounded on the perception of the bodily senses, or the operation of our reasonable powers.” He says, that two things are to be considered in regard to a justifying faith. One is the object, about which it is conversant ; the other is, the assent of the mind with reference to this object. Sometimes the object of christian faith is the doctrine of Jesus ; sometimes God ; sometimes Christ ; Christ, as the Messiah ; Christ, as the Son of God ; Christ, as shedding his blood on the cross ; Christ, as risen from the dead. Dr. C. takes occasion in this discourse to touch upon the unreasonableness of censuring one another’s creed, and the worth and loveliness of a charitable spirit.

“The short of the matter is,” says he, “the truths contained in the revelations of God, considered in one collective view, are the proper object of faith.”



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1765.

The fourth sermon is occupied in showing the proper influence or operation of this justifying faith. It shows itself in a new temper, in good works, in regeneration, repentance, and holiness of heart and life. It showed itself in the obedience of Abraham, Abel, Enoch, and Noah ; and is, in short, visible in the life of every good man.

The fifth sermon continues to display more particularly the nature of justifying faith.

The sixth assigns to justifying faith its proper place.

The seventh shows that “ human endeavours, in the use of means, are the way, in which faith is obtained.” Our author here combats the notion maintained by Solifidians, that God is the sole author of faith in the soul of man, and that it is wrought independently of all human agency and cooperation. He allows indeed, and contends for the truth, that God is the author of the truth to be believed ; but he insists, that the act of believing is man’s ; and, that faith, like every thing else, is to be sought for in the use of the means of religion.

In the eighth discourse Dr. C. proceeds with the arguments, and specifies particular acts, of which a man, though destitute of justifying faith, is capable, and which, as a reasonable being, he ought to perform. He contends, that sinners may, with the divine aid, so exert their rational faculties, as to be convinced of the being and perfections of God ; of the difference between moral good and evil ; of their obligations to choose the first and avoid the last ; of the immortality of



their souls ; of the truth of revelation ; and of the importance of fleeing from the wrath, which is denounced against the impenitent. In consequence of this faith, though not a justifying one, the Dr. affirms, that sinners may grieve for their sins, practise duties formerly neglected ; read the scriptures ; prefer religious meditation to the vanities of the world ; attend to the institutions of christianity ; to prayer ; and to the culture of their religious affections. These things are their indispensable duty. Even if they cannot perform them from the highest principles, they ought to act under the influence of the best principles, they possess. Better avoid sin from no higher motive, than the mere dread of hell, than not avoid it at all.

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1765.

In the ninth discourse it is stated, that these endeavours of sinners, previously to their arriving at justifying faith, are the ordinary methods, by which the Deity begins and effectuates the work of faith in their hearts. Instances are adduced in proof and illustration ; and it is pretty well established, not only that the use of means is connected with the attainment of salvation, but that means are blessed in proportion to the diligence, with which they are used.

The tenth discourse is occupied in answering objections. It is objected, for instance, that faith is an entire and immediate act of almighty power. Dr. C. answers, Should this be the truth, it will not follow, that human endeavours are needless. For God, if he please, may as well make seeking sinners the subjects of this gift, as the thought-





SEC. XV. less and obdurate. Should it however prove  
1765. true, that, in the bestowment of faith, men are not merely passive subjects of this gift, the preceding remarks upon human endeavours are highly important. And this way of communicating the gift appears most rational and scriptural. It seems reasonable to suppose, that God, in drawing sinners to Christ, would accomplish the work by cooperating with human faculties in the use of proper means. Had the powers of men been destroyed by the original lapse, it would indeed be impossible for them to do any thing of themselves, until those faculties were restored by a divine energy. But, as they exist in men, it is reasonable to suppose, that God would produce faith within them in a way, which is adapted to their character. And this is the way prescribed in the scriptures. Faith in Christ is a commanded duty. A neglect to acquire this faith is declared to be a sin. It is thus made certain, that men are considered, as accountable agents in the business of faith. Why did Christ work miracles, but to produce in the minds of men the work of faith? And why are the means and motives so numerous of exciting attention to the truths of the gospel? Plainly, that men might not want suitable stimulus to the discharge of their duty, and that, if negligent, they might be without excuse. For "how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear, without a preacher?"



From these questions of the apostle, this is his conclusion. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." SEC. XV.

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[The author had proceeded no further, at his death.]

ACCOUNT OF DR. CHAUNCY'S FAMILY. BY DR. CLARKE.

"Charles Chauncy, from whom the Chauncys in this country descended, was born, A.D. 1589. He had his grammar education at Westminster-school; and was at school, at the time the gunpowder plot was to have taken effect; and must have perished, if the parliament-house had been blown up. He was afterwards, when qualified, sent to the university of Cambridge, where he commenced bachelor of divinity, and was chosen hebrew professor. But the vice-chancellor, Dr. Williams, preferring a kinsman, he was fixed in the greek professorship. He was an accurate hebrician and grecian, and indeed admirably skilled in all the learned languages. He went out of the university an eminent gospel-preacher; was first settled at Marston, and afterwards removed to Ware, where his success became matter of much observation.

It was in the days of archbishop Laud, that, for ease to his conscience, he came over to New-england. He arrived at Plymouth, a few days before the great earthquake, which happened, 1 January, 1638. He spent some time at Plymouth, ministering to the church there, with their



SEC. XV. pastor, the Rev. Mr. Reyner, and then settled at Scituate, where he continued about nine years ; when, upon an invitation from his old friends at Ware, he purposed a removal back to England with his family ; but, when he came to Boston, in order to take passage, the overseers of Harvard college, by their vehement importunity, prevailed upon him to take the presidentship of that society, in which place he continued to the day of his death, highly honoured for his learning and piety.

In the year 1671, he made his farewell oration, on the day of commencement ; and, towards the close of the year, exchanged this life for a better, in the 82d year of his age, and the 17th of his presidentship over Harvard college.

He left behind him six sons, every one of whom received their degrees at the college, and some of them from the hands of their aged father. They all, for a time, were preachers ; and some of them settled in the ministry, and continued in it, till death.

Isaac, the eldest of the sons, left this country, and became pastor to a church in London. If I mistake not, he officiated with the Rev. Dr. Watts. He had three children. The youngest, by the name of Charles, came out into this country, and settled here a merchant.

From this Charles descended Charles, who was born 1 January, A. D. 1705."

To this I would add, that, at the age of seven years, Dr. Chauncy lost his father. At twelve, he entered college ; commenced master of arts at nineteen ; and was associated with the



Rev. Mr. Foxcroft, in the pastoral care of the SEC. XV.  
First Church, 25 October, 1727. In 1742, he  
was honoured with the degree of doctor in divi-  
nity by the university of Edinburgh. He expired,  
10 February, 1787, in the 83d year of his age.

Dr. Chauncy had three children.

*A Catalogue of the printed works of Dr. Chauncy.*

- A sermon on the death of Mrs. Sarah Byefield, 1731.
- A sermon on the death of Miss Elizabeth Price, 1732.
- A sermon on the death of judge Byefield, 1733.
- A sermon before the artillery company, 1734.
- A sermon on the death of Mr. Jonathan Williams, 1737.
- A sermon on religious compulsion, 1739.
- A sermon on the death of Mrs. Lucy Waldo, 1741.
- A sermon on the new creature, 1741.
- A sermon on an unbridled tongue, 1741.
- A sermon on the various gifts of ministers, 1742.
- A sermon on the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, 1742.
- A sermon on enthusiasm, 1742.
- Account of the french prophets, in a letter to a friend, 1742.
- Seasonable thoughts on the state of religion, 8vo. 1743.
- A sermon at the instalment of the Rev. Mr. Frink, 1744.
- A sermon at the annual convention, 1744.
- A letter to Rev. George Whitfield, publicly calling on  
him to defend his conduct, or confess his faults, 1744.
- A second letter to the same, 1745.
- Thanksgiving sermon on the reduction of cape Breton, 1745.
- A sermon on the death of Mr. Cornelius Thayer, 1745.
- A sermon on the rebellion in favour of the pretender, 1745.
- An election sermon, 1747.
- A sermon on the death of Mrs. Foxcroft, 1749.
- A sermon for encouraging industry, 1752.
- A sermon on murder, 1754.
- A sermon on the earthquake, 1755.
- Account of the Ohio defeat, in a letter to a friend, 1755.
- A particular narrative of the defeat of the french army,  
at lake George, in a letter to a friend, 1755.





- SEC. XV. A sermon on the earthquakes in Spain, &c. 1756.  
 A sermon on the death of Mr. Edward Gray, 1757.  
 The opinion of one, who has perused the summer morning's conversation, &c. 1758.  
 Dudleian Lecture. On presbyterian ordination, 1762.  
 A sermon at the ordination of Rev. Jos. Bowman, 1762.  
 Twelve sermons, particularly referring to the Sandemanian doctrines, 1765.  
 A sermon at the ordination of Rev. Mr. Bowen, 1766.  
 A sermon on the death of Dr. Mayhew, 1766.  
 Thanksgiving sermon on the repeal of the stamp-act, 1767.  
 A sermon at the ordination of Rev. Mr. Howard, 1767.  
 Remarks on the bishop of Landaff's sermon, in a letter to a friend, 1767.  
 Answer to Dr. Chandler's appeal, 1768.  
 A sermon on the death of Rev. Thomas Foxcroft, 1769.  
 A sermon on the death of Dr. Sewall, 1769.  
 "Trust in God, the duty of a people," &c. a sermon preached at the request of a number of patriotick gentlemen, 1770.  
 Reply to Dr. Chandler's appeal defended, 1770.  
 A complete view of episcopacy. 8vo. 1771.  
 Five sermons on the communion, 1772.  
 A sermon on "all things in common," 1773.  
 A just representation of the hardships and sufferings of the town of Boston, in a letter to a friend, 1774.  
 A sermon on the "accursed thing," 1778.  
 The mystery hid from ages, or the salvation of all men. 8vo. 1784.  
 The benevolence of the Deity, fairly and impartially considered. 8vo. 1784.  
 Five dissertations on the fall and its consequences. 8vo. 1785.  
 A sermon upon the return of the society to their house of worship, after it had undergone the necessary repairs, 1785.



## SECTION XVI.

Sketch of the life and character of the late Rev. Dr. Clarke.

**JOHN CLARKE, D. D.** pastor of the First Church in Boston, was born at Portsmouth, in Newhampshire, April 13, 1755; graduated at Harvard college, in 1774; and ordained, July 8, 1778, as colleague with the late Dr. Chauncy, with whom he lived, in the most intimate and respectful friendship, about nine years; and afterwards continued assiduously and faithfully labouring in the service of the church, until the Lord's-day, April 1, 1798; when, in the midst of his afternoon sermon, he was suddenly seized with an apoplexy, fell down in the pulpit, and expired in less than twelve hours; having almost completed the forty-third year of his age, and the twentieth year of his ministry.

Descended from respectable parents, who live to lament an only son, he discovered in early life the signs of genius and industry. At the university, he was distinguished by a close attention to classick and philosophick studies, by a strict obedience to the laws, and by irreproachable morals. In the office of preceptor, he was gentle and persuasive, beloved by his pupils, and esteemed by their friends. As a publick preacher,



SEC. XVI. his compositions bore the marks of penetration, judgment, perspicuity, and elegance. Faithful to the interest of religion, he deeply examined its foundation and evidence ; and, persuaded of the truth and importance of the christian system, he recommended, by his publick discourses and private conversation, its sublime doctrines, its wise institutions, and its salutary precepts.

Though fond of polite literature and philosophick researches, yet he considered theology, as the proper science of a gospel minister. To this object he principally devoted his time and studies, and was earnestly desirous of investigating every branch of it, not merely to gratify his own sacred curiosity, but that he might impart to his hearers the whole counsel of God. He was habitually a close student ; and it is not improbable, that the intenseness of his mental application proved too severe for the delicate fabrick of his nerves.

His devotional addresses were copious and fervent ; and his intercessions strong and affectionate ; discovering at once the ardour of his piety, and the warmth of his benevolence. In the private offices of pastoral friendship, he was truly exemplary and engaging. His temper was mild and cheerful ; his manners easy and polite ; and the social virtues of an honest heart gave a glow to his language, and enlivened every circle, in which he was conversant.

In the relations of a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a guardian, a correspondent, a master, a friend, and a member of several literary and char-



itable societies,\* his deportment was marked with affection, fidelity, and carefulness. He was concerned for the interest, reputation, and happiness of all his connexions ; and zealously devoted to the cause of science and humanity.

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Being successour to *ten* eminent luminaries of the church of God, he was studious to emulate them in piety, learning, and usefulness. Like three of them, he was suddenly called off from his ministerial labours, and, having happily escaped the painful agonies of a lingering death, is gone to receive the reward of a faithful servant, and enter into the joy of his Lord.

Dr. Clarke's printed works are four sermons, one on the death of Dr. Cooper, one on the death of Dr. Chauncy, one on the death of Dr. N. W. Appleton, and one before the Humane Society ; An answer to the question, Why are you a Christian ? which has had three editions in Boston, and three in England ; and Letters to a student at the university of Cambridge."

A volume of Dr. Clarke's sermons has been published, since his decease. It is a selection, that does honour to his memory ; and will be cherished by the christian and the scholar, as exhibiting, in elegant and very impressive language, the pure and pious sentiments of one of the best of men.†

\* Dr. Clarke was a counsellor of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, corresponding secretary of the Humane Society of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, and one of the members of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

† [To this has since been added a volume, containing seventeen sermons to the young.]





SEC. XVI. His remains were entombed, the friday after  
his decease, with every mark of esteem and affec-  
tion. A sermon was preached at his interment  
by Rev. Peter Thacher, D.D. from 2 Sam. i. 26.

1798.

5 April.

8 April.

On the Lord's-day after the decease of Dr. Clarke, a discourse was delivered to his bereaved flock, by Rev. Dr. Willard, president of the university in Cambridge, from which the following character of the deceased is selected.

“ Being a tutor at the university, when he became a member, and the class, to which he belonged, being committed to my particular care, I had an early opportunity of knowing his character, and I was soon led to distinguish in him that genius and application to study, together with that amiable disposition and excellent spirit, which have ever since conspicuously shone in him. For two years and a quarter, I continued with the class, and, during that time, his improvements in literature and science were very observable ; and his conduct was so uniformly good, in every respect, that he never merited or received a censure, or a frown from any one, who had the care and instruction of the youth ; and I found by information, after my leaving the class and the university, that he maintained the same character, through the whole of his collegiate course. And perhaps there never was a student, who passed through the university and went into the world with a fairer reputation, and few with more solid and useful acquirements.

For some time after Mr. Clarke left the university, he was engaged in the instruction of



youth, in which employment he was highly esteemed and beloved. But, whatever his pursuits were, he did not suffer his mind to be diverted from the great object, he had in view, which was to fit for the sacred desk. While he was faithful in performing the business he undertook, he devoted his leisure hours to accomplish himself for that profession, which lay nearest his heart; and he pursued his theological studies with great assiduity, so that, when he first entered the desk, it was not with a superficial knowledge. His natural abilities and literary acquirements were such, as enabled him to search the sacred oracles with accuracy, especially the original of the new testament, and to attend to every subject in divinity with judgment. And such was the candour and fairness of his mind, that few men, perhaps, have been more free from prejudices in their researches. He therefore became a scribe well instructed in the gospel system.

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His discourses early discovered an elegant taste in composition, a correctness, propriety, and pertinence in thought, and that strain of seriousness and piety, which could not but be attractive. You, my brethren, soon heard of his worth; and, when you employed him, as a candidate for the ministry among you, your expectations from him were not disappointed; nay, it will not be beyond the truth to say, that they were more than answered. After preaching with you a competent time, he was ordained over you, as a colleague pastor with the venerable, learned, and valuable doctor Chauncy, with whom he



SEC. XVI. served, as a son with a father ; and between them  
1798. there ever existed the most happy harmony, till the day of the doctor's death.

Having obtained a settlement, he did not grow remiss about future improvements, but continued the same assiduity, which had been a distinguished trait in his character. To the liberal arts and sciences, for which he had a true relish, and in which he was no common proficient, he, at times, paid attention. But these he considered, as nothing more, than handmaids to divinity, and of but secondary consideration. Divinity was his profession ; and to this he directly applied a principal part of his time. He had devoted himself to the cause of God and the Redeemer, and he would not suffer other pursuits, however pleasing to his ingenious mind, to steal him away from his proper functions, and rob him of that time, which he considered himself bound in duty to employ for the instruction and edification of his flock, either in preparation for his publick labours among them, or in private interviews with the various members. I have dwelt the more largely on this part of his character, because a scholar of Dr. Clarke's acquirements, and taste for literature and science, is under a strong temptation to spend more time in such pursuits, than is consistent with properly discharging the duties of his sacred profession.

Your pastor employed himself much in the study of the holy scriptures. To these heavenly oracles he repaired, as the sources of divine knowledge, and endeavoured to gain right apprehensions of the truths contained in them, both for



his own sake and the sake of his hearers, whom he instructed in these, according to his best understanding, after making use of the most approved helps he could procure, and which he was constantly laying himself out to obtain.

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His pulpit performances were always acceptable. With those compositions of his, which I have either heard or read, I have ever been pleased and edified. His treatise in defence of christianity, entitled, "Why are you a christian?" is perhaps as valuable a piece, as has been written within the same compass. By its conciseness it is well adapted to being dispersed; and by its perspicuity and pertinence happily calculated to convince and confirm. It is highly esteemed, not only on this, but on the other side of the Atlantic. I have received, but a little while since, a letter from a respectable divine in Greatbritain.\* In this letter he says, "We have here been greatly pleased, instructed, and impressed by a little piece, by one of your ministers, Mr. Clarke, entitled, "Why are you a christian?" And after mentioning, that three editions of it had been printed in England, two of which he himself had carried through the press, he adds, "The circulation of it cannot fail to give pleasure to the pious and worthy author, and to insure its views of usefulness."

His pleasing private intercourse with you, and also with the children of the society, whom he delighted to instruct, you need not be reminded of. The impressions made by these endearments will not be soon, if ever, effaced. Indeed, so sweet was his disposition, and so engaging his

\* The Rev. Joshua Toulmin, D. D. of Taunton.





SEC XVI. manners ; so pleasing was he in his conversation, and so amiable in all his interviews with those he met, that a general esteem of and affection for him was almost unavoidably excited ; and he was beloved by all, but the determined foes of virtue and goodness.

1798.

I pass over his domestick virtues, in which he was eminent, and which all, who knew him, witnessed.

What an unspeakable loss have you sustained in the death of such a minister and friend ! But let the bereaved relatives, let the members of this religious society, consider the consolations, which offer themselves in the midst of their grief. You have all abundant reason to conclude, that he was a man of habitual piety, and that he lived mindful of his exit ; so that, although he was suddenly summoned out of time into eternity, he was prepared for the change, and that “ his loins were girded about, and his light burning.” He may be said to have been watching, when his master knocked. He was even then particularly employed in his service, engaged in the very act of religious teaching, and endeavouring to prepare men for a better world.

Such grounds of comfort have we, when we reflect upon the character of our dear departed friend. We consider him, as one, who had been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise ;\* and that, having been thus sealed, he is now ascended to that “ Holy One, who inhabiteth the praises of Israel.”†

\* A part of the text, treated upon by the deceased, on the forenoon of the day of his decease, previous to the communion. Eph. i. 13.

† The subject, upon which he was treating in the afternoon, when he was seized with the fatal malady.



## SECTION XVII.

The following character of Rev. Mr. Emerson is extracted from  
Rev. J. S. Buckminster's sermon, at his funeral.

“ **H**ELP, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth ; for  
the faithful fail from among the children of men !” SEC. XVII.  
Psalm xii. 1. 1811.

*The godly man ceaseth.* The Reverend William Emerson\* gave early indications of devotedness to the service of God. He was a descendant of pious ancestors, through many generations ; and the only son of one of the most popular and promising ministers of Newengland, who died early in the american revolution. The mother, who survives to mourn over the death of her son, saw him with delight soon giving his attention and studies to the word and ministry of that God, to whom the prayers and wishes of his parents had directed his first thoughts. They, who knew him best, during the most trying period of youthful virtue, bear witness to the sin-

\* The following dates and facts, relating to Rev. Mr. Emerson and his family, may be grateful to his friends and the publick.

He was the son of Rev. William Emerson and Phebe his wife, daughter of the Rev. Daniel Bliss.

He was born at Concord, 6 May, 1769.

Graduated at Cambridge, 1789.

Ordained at Harvard, 1792.

Installed in the First Church, Boston, 16 Oct. 1799.

Died, 12 May, 1811.



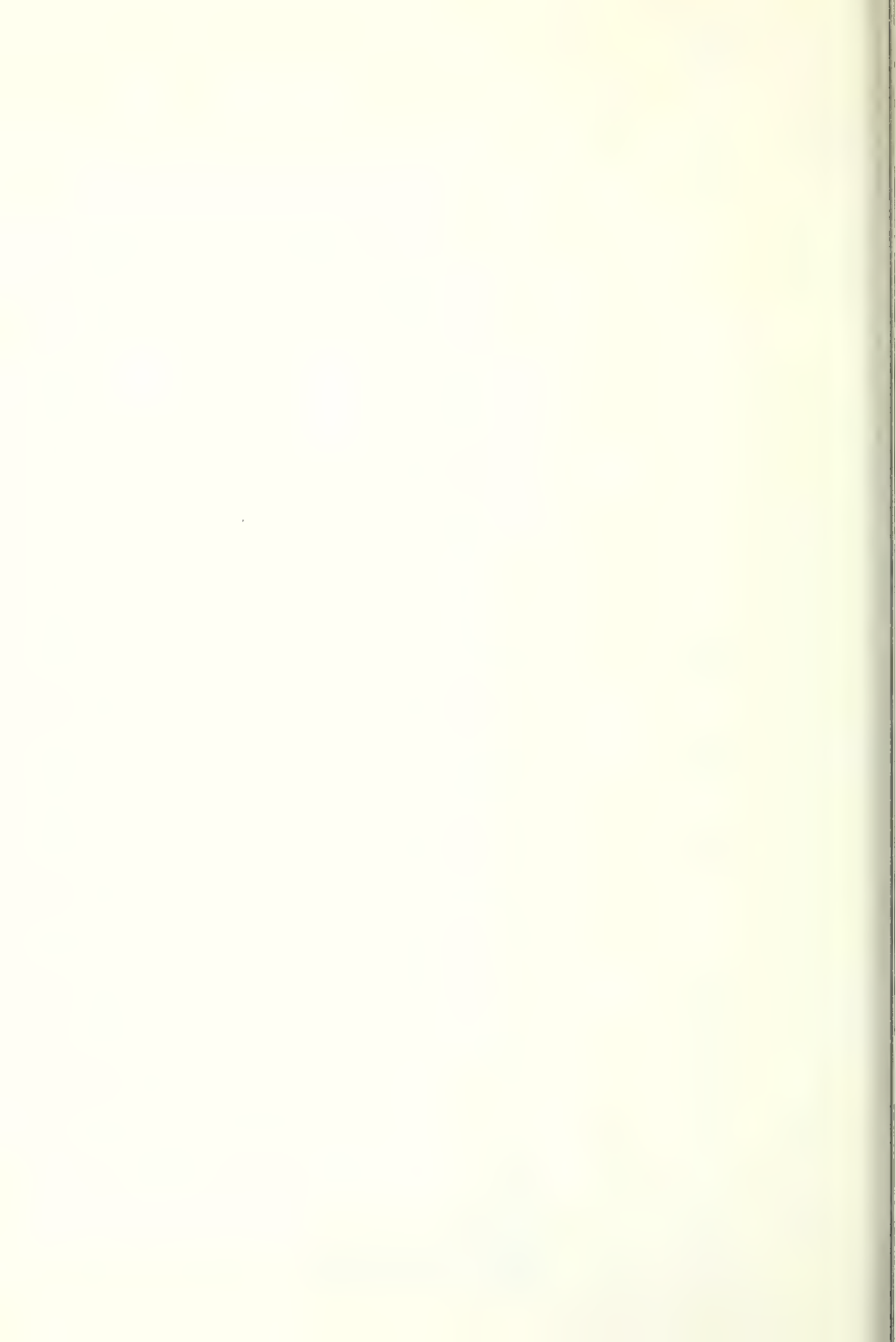
SEC. XVII. gular purity of his mind, tenderness of his conscience, devoutness of his feelings, and strictness of his manners ; qualities, which, by God's blessing, age and experience did not diminish, and which his christian profession afterwards secured and improved.

In one of the longest conversations, which I was permitted to hold with him, a few days before his death, when his mind seemed to be lighted up anew, and his faculties to collect fresh vigour, he expressed the most grateful and pious satisfaction in the circumstance, that he, with all his father's family, had so early felt the obligations of the gospel, as to give themselves up to Jesus Christ by a profession of his religion. The privilege of being a christian then occupied his thoughts ; and he continued to talk with unusual animation of the benefits of early communion ; and to express his wishes, that his eldest son, then at his bedside, might not forget early to seek, nor be so unhappy as ever to forfeit, this christian privilege. That great article of the christian dispensation, the resurrection from the dead, was the frequent theme of his meditations, and of his publick instructions ; so that his faith was not vain, nor his preaching vain ; for his faith was always strong enough to render his preaching the expression of his own intimate persuasions, and the cheerful employment of his life.

1808.

May.

Of the practical strength of his faith and piety he was permitted to give us a memorable example, during that sudden attack, which he sustained, a few years since, in all the fulness of his health and expectations, when he was busily pre-



paring for a publick service. Those, who then saw him brought down, in an instant, and without any previous warning, to the gates of death, can never forget the steadfastness, with which he received the alarm, and the singular humility and composure, with which he waited, during many days, doubtful of life, and expecting every hour to leave all, that was dear to him on earth, to present himself before God.\* Next to the satisfaction of behaving well ourselves, in an hour of trial, is that of witnessing the tranquillity of our friends, and finding, that we need not fear for their example, while flesh and heart is failing, for God is the strength of their heart and their portion forever.

SEC. XVII.

1808.

The same steadfastness, and tranquil foresight of his dissolution God has enabled him to exhibit, through the whole of the distressing and lingering disorder, of which he died. A few hours before his death, he overheard some conversation respecting those, who should pass the night with him ; and he summoned strength enough to articulate " God is with me !" The great interest, with which some persons always watch the

1811.

\* It was in the year 1808, that he was attacked with a profuse hemorrhage from the lungs, from the effects of which he never completely recovered. But the disease, of which he died, had not probably the remotest connexion with this bleeding. It appeared upon examination, that the lower orifice of the stomach was almost entirely closed by a schirrhous tumour, or hard swelling, which on the inside was ulcerated. So completely was the passage of the pylorus obliterated, that a drop of water could hardly be pressed through it from the stomach, which was full.





SEC. XVII. last intelligent exercises of a spirit, which has been

1611.

warned of its departure, was here not disappointed. No one could leave his presence without a secret consciousness, that the collected, intelligent, and strong indications, which he daily gave, of profound submission to God's will, and unshaken faith in his gospel, were very much to be preferred to the indistinct raptures and ejaculations, which are so often caught from the lips of the dying, where more is supposed to be meant, than meets the ear, and more is put into the speech, than was originally contained in the thought. The approach of death gave no new colour to his faith ; and he has left us a proof, which will long be remembered, not of the truth indeed, but of the power of those principles, by which, for nearly twenty years, he had preached and practised.

He was a *faithful* as well, as a pious man. Of his fidelity in his ministerial office, you, my hearers, are of course better judges, than the preacher. But from his extraordinary correctness of manners, and disposition to method in the disposal of his time, great fidelity might be expected in what he regarded, as his duty ; and this sentiment as well, as the desire of doing good, would engage so careful a mind, as his, in the punctilious discharge of the duties of his profession. The prosperity of this ancient church was peculiarly dear to him. He looked back with veneration almost unbounded on some of his predecessors here ; and while he breathed much of their spirit, he successfully



## SEC. XVII.

1811.

emulated their merits. He was a happy example of that correct and rational style of evangelical preaching, of which the yet lamented Clarke has left so fair a specimen. Our departed brother had long been employed on a history of the First Church; and was engaged in the analysis of the works and character of Chauncy, when his progress was arrested by the disease, of which he died, and he was called to join the company of those great and good men, whom he had before known only in their works, but now face to face.

Such is the constitution of society among us, that much of the care of our literary and charitable institutions devolves upon those clergymen, who have disposition and qualifications for the task. Mr. Emerson's industry, integrity, accuracy, and fidelity were well known in the numerous societies, of which he was a member. The town has lost a diligent observer of its youth and their education; the Academy and Historical Society an associate greatly interested in their flourishing state; the University an attentive overseer. The clergy throughout the country have lost a hospitable and liberal brother; his family a most careful and excellent father, husband, and master; and his friends an honourable and faithful friend.

O 'tis well

With him. But who knows what the coming hour,

Veil'd in thick darkness, brings for us?



SEC. XVII. The following is, we believe, a correct list of his acknowledged publications.

1811.

1. Sermon at Harvard, 4 July, 1794.
2. Sermon at the artillery election, Boston, 1799.
3. Sermon before the Roxbury Charitable Society, 1800.
4. Sermon at the ordination of Rev. Robert Smiley, 23 September, 1801.
5. Boston Oration, 4 July, 1802.
6. Sermon on the death of Rev. Dr. Thacher, 1802.
7. Sermon at the ordination of Rev. Thomas Bedé, 1803.
8. Sermon on the death of madam Bowdoin, 1803.
9. Sermon before the Boston Female Asylum, 1805.
10. Sermon on the death of Charles Austin, 1806.
11. Discourse before the Humane Society, 1807.
12. The first, second, third, and seventh discourses in the fourth number of the Christian Monitor, with the prayers annexed to each discourse.
13. A selection of psalms and hymns, embracing all the varieties of subject and metre, suitable for private devotion and the worship of churches, 12mo. 1808.
14. Sermon at the ordination of Rev. Mr. Clark, Burlington, 1810.

His father was son of Rev. Joseph Emerson and Mary his wife, daughter of Rev. Samuel Moody of York. The following extract from an obituary notice of his early death is dated

"Concord, Nov. 1st. 1776.

On the morning of the Lord's day, the 20th of October last, died at Rutland, on Otter creek, the Rev. Mr. William Emerson, pastor of the church of Christ in this town, in the 35th year of his age. His zeal for the liberties of his country, which appeared from the beginning of the present troubles, animated him to accompany his brethren in the reinforcement lately sent by this state to our army at Ticonderoga, as chaplain of a regiment. But the hardships, to which he was exposed, soon overcame his delicate constitution, and brought on the symptoms of a bilious fever; which, when he had proceeded a few miles on his return, attacked him with greater violence, and prevailed, until his Lord called him from the labours and sufferings of this life to receive his reward."



GOOD MEN ALWAYS DESIRE THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

## A SERMON,

DELIVERED AT FIRST CHURCH, BOSTON, 17 JULY, 1808, THE DAY  
OF LEAVING THE PLACE OF WORSHIP FOR A NEW EDIFICE.  
BY WILLIAM EMERSON, THE PASTOR.

*Exod. xxxiii. 15.*

If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

WE have arrived, my brethren, at so noticeable a period in the history of our church, that I was unable to restrain myself from addressing you, on the singular occasion. For sufficient reasons, and, I hope, for our own and the common benefit in time to come, we are about to abandon this house, which, for ninety-five years, has been used, as a place of worship. In resigning it to a ruin, which, in a few years, would, in spite of all our exertions, inevitably have overtaken it, and which, in a few years more, will creep over all terrestrial things, we are naturally led to review the records of our society. We feel a strong inclination to recur to the days of our fathers, and trace the most memorable passages in their christian pilgrimage. This duty I had proposed to my-





self, in looking forward to the day, which we now behold. An unforeseen, and, to me, awful dispensation of providence however, in suspending the exercise of my ministry, seemed to cover this purpose, and all my other purposes, with a veil of darkness. But that God, whose province it is to heal as well, as to wound, is prolonging a life, which was apparently destined to immediate waste. May it be in mercy to my and your souls ! Blessed God ! “ If thy presence go not with me, carry me not up hence ! ” If thy pleasure may not prosper in my hand, take away utterly that life, which thou hast so severely threatened ! For thy favour is life, and thy loving kindness is better than life. Nevertheless, O God, not my will, but thine be done !

Since then it seems to be the will of heaven, that I should resume my pastoral labours, I cannot, I say, deny myself the pleasure of putting you in remembrance of the divine conduct, towards this church, in former generations, and of imploring, with you, the divine presence in our contemplated removal. It will hardly deserve the name of a discourse ; and, were not my situation perfectly well known, I should sit in silence with you, and meditate on the desolation hastening upon these hallowed walls. But I cast myself on your candour and kindness, which, in most instances, have exceeded my expectations, and my deserts in all.

The words, which I place at the head of my discourse, were spoken in an address to God by the hebrew legislator. On his way from Egypt to Canaan with the israelitish tribes, he was favoured of Jehovah with frequent interviews. The Deity is said to have conversed with him “ face to face, as a man talketh



with his friend." He was directed what course to pursue, when to travel, and where to rest. A cloud by day, and a fire by night, were tokens of the divine presence, and formed the guidance and consolation of the journeying Jews.

Moses had now received the ten commandments from the mouth of Jehovah. During his stay in the mount however, the rebellious disposition of the people broke forth, in a request to Aaron, that he would make them a god to go before them. At this unpardonable instance of infidelity, the anger of the Lord was justly kindled, and he said to Moses, "Depart, and go up hence, thou, and the people, which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt ; and I will send an angel before thee ; for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way. And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put on him his ornaments." As for Moses, he was overwhelmed with sorrow. Though innocent himself of the great transgression, he was yet alive to its dangers and consequences, with respect to the people ; and as much, as he censured their folly, he was determined to share in their fate. He interceded for their salvation, and could not endure the thought of being deprived of the conduct of Jehovah. Irksome, as was a precarious residence in the wilds of Arabia, and pleasing, as was the prospect of resting in the land of Canaan, he was willing to renounce the last, and endure the first, rather than lose the protection and presence of the Lord. "And he said, if thine own presence go not with us, carry us not up hence."



The spontaneous prayer of any pilgrim to a better world ! Yes, good men always desire the presence of God. As they love what is excellent, so they desire to be intimately acquainted with the source of excellence. They have no relish for worldly advantages, if they cannot be enjoyed with the presence of God. Offer them power, and they reject it ; wealth, and they despise it ; pleasure, and they loathe it, if these goods are not to be possessed, except at the expense of their integrity, and their religious principles. They will not violate the laws of God to obtain the favour of man. They will not inhabit the most fruitful soil, and under the happiest skies, and in the most magnificent buildings, if they must be confined to the company of the wicked, and deprived of the institutes and instructions of religion. Virtuous men, from the beginning of the world, have manifested a disposition to separate themselves from the workers of iniquity, and put themselves under the protection of heaven.

This truth might be illustrated by numerous examples in sacred history.

Abel had no sweet communion with his brother Cain, and Enoch preferred walking with God, in solitude, to mixing with the idolaters of his age. Noah sufficiently testified his desire for the presence of God, by seceding from the corrupt antediluvians, whom his preaching could not reform, and by building an ark for the salvation of his house. Abraham showed his regard for the divine presence, in renouncing his kindred and country, and seeking a habitation in a strange land. Isaac was under the influence of the same religious principle, and accordingly preserves himself and his



family pure from the contagion of idolatry and vice, then prevalent in the world. And the same principle of piety actuated the vows and obedience of Jacob, who solemnly promised, "If the Lord will bring me in safety to the land of my fathers, then the Lord shall be my God." Joseph was an illustrious instance of a man, who desired the presence of God ; who kept his integrity amidst the most pressing temptations ; and who uniformly adhered to truth, conscience, and duty, whatever the adherence might cost him. Moses too, from the time, when he was called, to the day of his death, seems to have felt the same reverence and anxiety for the divine approbation, which he expresses in the text. He was ever unwilling to go, where God went not, and ever desirous to dwell, where God had pitched his abode. "He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward." The same likewise may be said of Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, and David, who all desired to enjoy the divine favour, and to be guided by the divine hand. The last mentioned character especially was remarkable for the warmth of his devout affections, and the zeal he bore for the offices of the sanctuary. "When," says he, "shall I come, and appear before God ? I will go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! Lord ! I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place, where thine honour dwelleth. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my





life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

To this list of worthies I might add the names of numbers of the hebrew prophets, who endured all sorts of temporal evil, rather than forfeit their allegiance to God, and their interest in his favour. See, in particular, Job, Nehemiah, and Daniel, tormented with the sharpest afflictions, which were either incurred or borne from a regard to the presence and promises of God.

The catalogue might be swelled by the mention of a host of christian confessors and martyrs, headed by the founder of our religion, who were all devoted to the will of God, who made his service their employment, and his glory the end of their ambition. Hear the blessed Jesus, amid the agonies, which he suffered in the garden. "The hour is come, and what shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? No; thou knowest, that I came not to do my will, but thine. Glorify thyself." Similar was the language of all his apostles as soon, as they were instructed in the nature of the gospel. They had no will but God's; and their seasons of travelling, and their places of rest, were entirely under the direction of Providence. They left their all, whether it were little or much, to follow Christ. Parents, children, and wives, lands, houses, and reputation, nowise hindered their obedience to the intimations of heaven. In the face of reproach and imprisonment, of tortures and death, they hesitated not to go, where God went, and to speak what he commanded. No. "None of these things moved them, neither counted they their lives dear unto them, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry, which they had received."



Ecclesiastical as well, as biblical history, furnishes the lives of many, whose piety, and fidelity to their religion, in the midst of bitter and sanguinary persecutions, are an honour to the christian name. Think of the universally harassed condition of christians, until the reign of Constantine. Recollect their sufferings under the cruel Dioclesian. Consider also the distressing and wicked wars, which differing sects of christians have waged with each other. In these various calamities, multitudes have suffered bravely, for what they have supposed to be the truth, and for the sake of enjoying that favour of God, with which the practice of virtue is connected.

If, my brethren, you go back only as far, as the beginning of the seventeenth century, you will find vast numbers of men, who honestly and gloriously contemned the means of living, and the honours of the world, when weighed with the dictates of conscience and fidelity to their God. "Take away these goods," said they, "they are not worth our peace." Two thousand ministers of the gospel, at the period of which I am speaking, were ejected from their livings for their nonconformity to the church of England; and many of them were hunted, with a malignant fury, from corner to corner, until the burden of their sorrows sunk them to the grave.

The conduct of the puritan fathers of Newengland illustrates the same sentiment of heroick piety. You well know, my brethren, the motives, which governed them in leaving the wealth, society, and comforts of Europe, for the wilds of America. They were unwilling to dwell, where they could not enjoy the presence



of God. Resolved on worshipping God in spirit and in truth, they accounted no enterprises hazardous, and no sacrifices dear, which promised them so rich a privilege. They valued their country, but they valued more dearly the rights of conscience. They loved their lives, but they loved their God more. They esteemed the civil and local immunities of their nation, but they esteemed, far more highly, the opportunity of educating their children in the fear of God ; in a knowledge of the first and inalienable duties of the rational nature ; and of rearing a pious, sober, and righteous generation. It was under the impression of these sentiments, that the pilgrims first sought an asylum in Holland, and afterwards crossed the Atlantick. It was from a regard to the approbation of God, that, as soon as they touched these shores, they dedicated themselves and their children to his service ; erected temples for his worship ; instituted colleges for the promotion of science and virtue ; and sowed the seeds of learning, piety, and good manners, wherever they planted a tree, or broke the soil. The neighbouring university and the numerous inferiour schools of literature, in this commonwealth, are so many vestiges of their wisdom and beneficence. In particular, do the churches in this metropolis and vicinity give proof of their zeal for religion ; of their concern for the house of the Lord and its services ; and of their determination to support, at whatever expense, the interests of learning and morals.

With what reverence and gratitude do we cherish the memory of men, who seemed to incorporate themselves with whatever promised to advance the Redeemer's kingdom and the interests of posterity ! Wherever we



cast our eyes, we are saluted with tokens of their piety and care. So sincere and zealous were they to give a tincture of holiness to all their doings, that their civil polity was in a manner borrowed from the bible. They valued the approbation of their minds, more than the applause of the world, and they feared no other power, than God.

Such, my brethren, were the founders of this church, who came to this country to worship God agreeably to the dictates of conscience ; to serve him rather with the mind, than with the precisions of bodily posture ; and to honour him rather by a remarkable piety and holiness of life, than by a ritual, addressed to the imagination and the senses.

The history, which precedes this discourse, is evidence, that these principles were kept in view by your worthy predecessors. They were uniformly the supporters of piety, order, and the rights of conscience. From the gathering of this church, to the present hour, its members have not ceased to worship God in the name of Christ. They have regularly maintained the ministry and ordinances of our common Lord. They have been attentive to the order and discipline of the churches, and the edification of individuals. And whilst they have duly respected the forms of antiquity, and opposed an innovating temper, they have cherished a laudable spirit of improvement. The freedom of our civil government has tended to abate the rigour of ecclesiastical courts ; and the severity, with which discipline was formerly administered, has latterly been unknown among you. You have begun to believe, that the power of councils is advisory merely ; that the only platform





of church government, which is legitimate and obligatory, is contained in the scriptures ; that there is, upon earth, no infallible head of the church ; that we have only one master, even Christ, and one only father, even God.

These articles of belief, my brethren, have, for many years, been firmly fixed in the minds of the members of this church. May these capital objects of our religious association be kept constantly in view !

Through all the changes, incident to an ancient institution, there has never been a time, in which you have not devoted the Lord's day, either by yourselves, or in union with a sister church, to the worship of God and christian edification.

The covenant, which was signed at Charlestown, on the twenty-seventh of August, 1630, was renewed in Boston, on the sixteenth day of October, 1632. It was then that this ecclesiastical establishment was begun. In that year was built the first edifice, which was ever reared for publick worship in the town of Boston. It stood at some distance from this place, and was far less spacious and magnificent, than even this ancient house. But its thatched roof and walls of mud answered all the purposes of marble temples with their gilded domes and cushioned altars. Enclosed in that humble meeting-house were some of the noblest and purest spirits, that ever bore the christian name. There the venerable Wilson exercised the functions of the pastoral office with the meekness of Moses, and the benevolence of St. John. There the learned, ethical, and eloquent Cotton expounded the scriptures with the boldness of an inspired prophet, and dictated, with holy zeal, the measures of both church and state. There the excellent



Winthrop, the inflexible Dudley, and the godly Nowel alternately prayed and prophesied, and gave the whole weight of their talents and influence in favour of evangelical principles and manners.

In the second edifice, which was completed in 1640, and stood till 1711, were still heard the teachings of Wilson and Cotton. It was there too, where the copious and masterly Norton urged home the doctrines of the gospel, upon the consciences of sinners ; where Davenport lifted his aged voice in pious supplications ; where Allen guarded the flock against the fanaticism of innovators ; where Oxenbridge poured forth his eloquence before the great congregation ; where the scientifick Wadsworth perspicuously taught the way of salvation ; where the energetick Bridge called sinners to repentance ; and where the persecuted Moody and the unoffending Bailey generously lent their aid to the service of the sanctuary.

The present house was built in 1712, and has resounded with the instructions of Wadsworth and Bridge, whom I have already named, and here my three immediate predecessors have publicly laboured. Yes, here the worthy Foxcroft exhorted his hearers to become reconciled unto God, through a blessed mediator. Here Chauncy's erudition dispelled the glooms of ignorance and fanaticism, and taught his hearers to offer to their God a reasonable service. And here the admirable Clarke, equally distinguished for his biblical and classical knowledge, charmed his hearers to the knowledge and love of their duty.

In addition to the regular services of the ministers of this church, the several edifices, which they have built,



have been devoted to the weekly labours of the neighbouring clergy. As early, as the settlement of Mr. Cotton, the 5th day or thursday lecture was begun to be preached. It was maintained by the ministers of this church, until 1679, when, at the request of the magistrates, and by a vote of this church, the ministers of the Old North and Old South churches, then the only ministers in town, were invited to take their turns in preaching this lecture. From that period to the present, as often, as a minister adjoins himself to the Boston Association, he is requested, as a thing of course, to take his turn in preaching the thursday lecture. There was a time, when this lecture was suspended, about ten months, in the years 1775 and 1776. Dr. Andrew Eliot preached the last of the old series, and the first of the new. How many excellent sermons has this institution been the means of producing ! What an incentive to laudable emulation among the divines of this metropolis !

But this place is henceforth no more to be a scene of moral and religious entertainment. We are going to the fourth spot and the fifth house, which have been devoted by this church to divine service. The history and habits of our society show, that it has indulged no superstition in regard to the places, modes, and times of religious homage.

We sometimes wish, and wish in vain, for the clear intimations of the divine will, which the Jews enjoyed. To us no Urim answers. For us no priest, in gorgeous habiliments, supplicates the divine benediction. The time was, when a certain mountain in Judea alone was deemed holy ; and the belief still is, in many parts of christendom, that particular forms are exclusively ac-



ceptable to the most high God. But, to rational christians, the hour has long since come, when true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth ; when every place is accounted holy, in which the one living and true God is adored by enlightened understandings and honest hearts, and where the rituals of religion are made subservient to a virtuous life. To the ancient jew indeed Jehovah declared, " In all places, where I record my name, there will I come 'unto thee and bless thee." And true it was, that, where that awful name was not inscribed, the priest offered no sacrifice, and the prophet waited in vain the inspiration of his God. Now, wherever there is a heart to pray, there the altar and the sacrifice are made ready. Now, wherever two or three are met together, in the name of Christ, there his father and our father, his God and our God will be in the midst of us, to listen to our requests, to pardon our sins, to sustain us under the troubles of life, and to grant us consolation and encouragement in our heavenly course.

Farewell, then, ye venerable walls ! you are not necessary to the purity of our worship. Much as we have loved this ancient habitation of the Most High, and notwithstanding the tenderness, with which we would treat the feelings of local devotion, we disclaim the idea, that, in relinquishing this for a more spacious and convenient church, we are guilty of robbing God of his dues, or the community of their sacred rights. No. We violate none of the laws of God in bettering our accommodations for publick worship. We break none of the commandments of Jesus Christ, in exchanging a house, which is exposed to the noise and dust of a





publick street, for one, which is remote from the business and amusements of the town.

To my heart this edifice is dear, from various circumstances. But to say, that the removal is attended with no painful sensations, we do not. Here it was, my brethren, that I received the charge of your souls, and here have I often renewed to you my vows of fidelity. Here we have frequently sitten, under the banner of Jesus, and his fruit has been sweet to our taste. How often have we here eaten the bitter herbs of penitence for past offences, and taken to our lips the cup of joy and salvation ! Here have I baptized and instructed your children, endeavouring to form them to the temper and habits of Jesus.

In uttering my own feelings, I have no doubt of expressing yours. It is true, not one of you present contributed personally, either of your wealth or wisdom, to the identical establishments, of which I have been speaking. But, God'be praised, you have continued to walk in the steps of your fathers. There has never been a time, when you have been unwilling to provide things decent and honourable in the sight of all men, for the support of religious instruction, and for rendering commodious and amiable the tabernacles of our God. The church, which you have recently built, and in which you expect shortly to worship the God of your fathers, is another confirmation of the truth, deduced from the text, that good men desire the presence of God. If there were no zeal in this society for the maintenance of sabbatical rites, the advantageous arrangement, which you have lately made, would not have taken place. However therefore we may in this age be blamed for



our inferiority in religious zeal to our puritan ancestors, we are yet willing to make some sacrifices for the honour of God and the religion of Jesus. In every part of our country, there are some to be found, and thousands, I hope, in this capital of the state, who would be unhappy in a privation of sacred privileges, and who are willing to deny themselves many enjoyments, and practise many mortifications, for the love they bear to the interests of religion, and the hope they entertain of its blissful rewards.

There is in man a propensity to roam. He loves novelty and variety. Were it not for this disposition, no improvements would be made ; no sciences nor arts would be cultivated. Society would remain stationary, or rather be retrograde. Every man would contentedly continue in the condition, in which his father left him, and indolence, torpor, and sensuality would creep on all the bodily and mental faculties. Look at the condition of the chinese. Shut up within themselves, they have no enterprise nor ambition. The understanding is shackled, and errors are perpetuated ; and, though they may be free from the agitations of more improved society, their repose is that of the grave.

And now, Lord, what wait we for ? What is our heart's desire ? Is it wealth ? Or splendour ? Or power ? Or the pleasures of sense ? No, thou omniscient being, thou knowest, that we want thy presence. We want the rest, which springs from peace of conscience, from sense of repentance, hope of thy pardon, and the prospect of heaven. If thy presence go not with us in the bestowment of these favours, carry us not up hence.



Justified therefore, my brethren, to our own consciences, in this important transaction, let our future conduct be such, as shall meet the approbation of God. For let it never be forgotten, that, if we would have God's presence go with us, we must go with God's presence. We must fear the divine power, imitate the divine benevolence, and obey the intimations of the divine will.

Finally. In whatever place and under whatever circumstances we may hereafter celebrate the praises of God, let us be careful to render him an acceptable service. Henceforth, if possible, let our worship be purified from all superstition. Let no motives of worldly interest or ambition enter into our religious performances. Let us carry with us this truth to our new temple, and bear it about with us continually, that the public offices of devotion are designed to promote the practice of virtue ; and that, if they fail of attaining this end, the Almighty will demand of us, " Who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts ?"

May the author of wisdom and power teach us the knowledge, and aid us in the performance of our whole duty, that, having served him voluntarily, sincerely, and faithfully, on the earth, we may at last be admitted to the general assembly and church of the first born in heaven ! Amen.



THE DESIRES OF GOOD MEN WILL BE GRATIFIED.

## A SERMON,

DELIVERED AT FIRST CHURCH, BOSTON, ON THURSDAY, 21 JULY,  
1808, WHEN DIVINE SERVICE WAS FIRST PERFORMED IN  
THAT EDIFICE. BY WILLIAM EMERSON, THE PASTOR.

*Exod. xxxiii. 14.*

My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

AND is there a place in the universe, where thou art not? Omnipresent and eternal God! Whither shall we go from thy spirit? Or whither shall we fly from thy presence? The immensity of space is thy constant abode, and every portion of it is filled with thy glory.

Yes, my brethren, the vast creation is the dwelling-place of the Most High. Every ray of light is a proof of his presence. The awful womb of night is the pavilion of his rest. You feel his breath in every wind, that blows. His pencil is at work in every opening flower. His voice is audible in the musick of the forest as well, as in the thunder of the skies and the roar of earthquakes. To mortal eyes he is indeed invisible. You go forward, but he is not there; and backward,





but you do not perceive him ; yet he is as really present in this place, as ye yourselves ; and you can as easily fly from yourselves, as from the beams of his eye, or the grasp of his hand.

Although however the presence of God is universal, it is not yet universally manifest. The Deity was as truly present in the bush, which Moses saw, before, as after, it was enveloped in flames. He was as really existing in all portions of the aerial expanse, always, as when the pillars of smoke and of fire conducted the steps of the hebrew pilgrims.

To this extraordinary and benignant display of the divine presence the venerable prophet alludes in the text. But a most heinous offence of the Jews awakened the anger of the Almighty, and caused him to threaten them with the loss of his presence. As God however is usually better to us, than our fears, and always better, than our deserts, so, in the case before us, he repented of the neglect, which he thought to show to the erring Israelites ; and he showed it not. Upon their penitence and promises of obedience, he blotted out their sin, and renewed his declarations to conduct and settle them in the land of Canaan. “ My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

Although there is a propensity in man to roam, yet there is also in his nature an almost unconquerable love of rest. These two permanent principles in human nature the Creator has set over, one against the other, as mutual, salutary checks to the excesses of each. Thus if, in the ardour of youth, we love to go in quest of adventures, in the torpor of age we are desirous of repose. We are with difficulty prevailed upon to quit our native



air, and remove to scenes, with which we have associated no sentiments of tenderness and affection.

Yet no man, in this probationary state, is permitted to gratify all the wishes of his heart. Good and evil are wisely blended together, in every stage of our terrestrial career. Contrary to their wishes, many times, those, who love tranquillity, are obliged to enter into the tumult and confusion of the world; and there are those again, who delight in the bustle and noise of the multitude, who are compelled to walk in the path of seclusion.

Such, nevertheless, is the versatile nature of man, the all conquering power of habit, and the unchangeable goodness of God, that the ingredients of happiness are ever within the reach of virtuous men. A man, at ease in his conscience, and satisfied with his own endeavours, can hardly be rendered miserable. A faithful servant of God may assuredly calculate on the favour of him, whose favour is life, and whose loving kindness is better than life. The presence of God may be always expected by a virtuous community. The desires of good men, having for their object the approbation and guidance of heaven, cannot fail of being eventually gratified. If God is infinitely good, he never would have created human beings, unless, in favour of those beings, he intended to display the benignity of his nature. The very existence of man is a proof of the goodness of God. The desire of happiness, in a creature, evinces the possibility of a happy condition. The appetites of hunger and thirst afford proof, that bread and water may be obtained; and they, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, are already pronounced happy; so certain is it, that they will be filled.



The whole tenour of the scripture promises is in favour of the sentiment, that God is the protector of good men, and that he will grant them the desire of their hearts. Our Saviour teaches, that God is better, than the best of parents. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give good things unto them who ask him."

The conduct of the divine providence towards the virtuous, in every age, has been a beautiful illustration of the same consolatory truth. Recollect, my brethren, the lives of those eminently good men, whose pious desires were mentioned in the preceding discourse. You will find, that they had a sense of the divine favour, and a hope of the divine guidance. See the presence of God with Abel, in the witness which he received, that he was righteous. Enoch, before his translation, had this testimony, that he pleased God. The presence of God was eminently with Noah, whilst building the ark, and was afterwards his salvation and joy. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though they did not receive the promises, had yet the favour of God, in this world, and died in expectation of a better country, than Canaan supplied. The presence of God was with the patriarch Joseph, and the divine counsels wonderfully prospered in his hand. And Moses surely, among whose records the text is found, was extraordinarily the subject of divine favour. So too were Joshua, Caleb, and the posterity of the hebrew emigrants. Jehovah fulfilled the promise, which he had made to their fathers; his presence went with them to the country of Palestine, where he gave them rest. It was a rest from the yoke of bondage, which



they endured in Egypt ; it was a rest from the wearisome journies, which they were obliged to take in the arabian wilderness ; it was, lastly, a rest from the wars, which they necessarily waged with savage nations. But it was not a rest from the ordinary labours of life, nor from the calamities, to which our nature is at all times exposed.

Beginning with the sacred founder of our religion, and tracing the history of his apostles and followers, through every successive period to the present, we shall have additional proof, that good men may be sure of the guidance of heaven. In every age of the world, God's presence is with them, and he gives them rest ; not indeed a rest of sloth ; not a rest of voluptuousness ; and not always a rest from the arrows of slander, and the sword of persecution ; for every age, probably, can furnish its Neros and Domitians. But the good are generally secure of a tranquil life, and are always untroubled by the persecutions of a guilty conscience, and the multitude of sorrows, which usually infest the path of the wicked. The rest, which God gave to good men, under the former dispensation, and to the early christians, was a rest from the unfruitful works of darkness, and from that sorrow of the world, which worketh death. And this kind of rest is the infallible portion of the righteous in the worst countries, and in the worst times. The good man cannot be deprived of his confidence in God, and in the final rectitude and benevolence of the divine administration. To be able to praise God in adversity as well, as prosperity, is to enjoy a peace, which passeth all understanding. To be superiour to the petty disasters and vexa-





tions of life ; to be able steadily to pursue, what is bravely designed ; to be deaf to the noise of a turbulent world, that the whispers of conscience may be distinctly heard ; and to descend with cheerfulness and hope into the valley of the shadow of death ; this is the peace of the just, and the most valuable rest, which, on this side heaven, remains for the people of God.

May those of us, who have experienced the presence of God, in moments of danger and affliction, and been able to commit our souls to a faithful Creator, when the terrible image of death was staring us in the face, be duly grateful to the almighty physician of soul and body ! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name ! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits !

Such a rest, my brethren, as I have been describing, was eminently the portion of those worthy men, who gave a name and a character to Newengland. Where was there ever a people, since the age of miracles, more favoured of heaven, than these puritan pilgrims ?

The governour and company of Massachusetts Bay, who laid the foundation of this christian society, in 1630, met innumerable difficulties in accomplishing their pious designs. But the presence of God was with them to dispel their fears, to increase their faith, and to animate their labours. The church, which they here planted, became a fruitful field. Their efforts to enlarge and enrich it were marvellously blessed. The expectations of our fathers were gloriously realized. A few years of toil were succeeded by an age of improvement and of rest. They were no longer tormented with the warwhoop by night, nor with the sight of con-



flagrations and ruin by day. We rejoice to reflect upon the success, which crowned the exertions of men, who were warmed with a love of truth, freedom, and the general welfare to make the most noble sacrifices. We, this day, look back with admiration and gratitude to God, when we think of the powerful talents, exemplary lives, and faithful services of a long succession of pastors and teachers, who have laboured in this christian vineyard, and who are now at rest with God.

Let us be thankful, my brethren, for all the good effects, which have resulted from this institution, in times past ; and for all the advantages, of whatever nature, which it now enjoys.

As far, as fallible mortals can judge, this day is auspicious to our interests, as a religious community. In place of an ancient and decaying house, situated in the most busy and populous part of the town, we possess this new, commodious, and beautiful edifice ; where, in the silence of retirement, yet in the centre of the territory of the metropolis, we may worship the Lord our God. Not that we condemn those venerable walls, which have enclosed so many pious worshippers, and which have so often resounded with excellent instructions and the divine praises. No, thou God of our fathers, thou knowest, that we, thy servants, “ take pleasure in the stones, and favour the dust thereof.”

Nevertheless, we rejoice in a more decent and comfortable church. And we bless God, who giveth skill to the children of men, for his remarkable protection of and smiles upon its artificers ; for the fortunate circumstances, that have attended its erection and completion ; for the activity and firmness, gentleness and discretion,



which have marked the conduct of the committees of the society, in effecting this important arrangement ; and for the entire union, subsisting among us.

Ah, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ! Next to the favour of God, it is natural and right for good men to love the approbation of God's children. They may not indeed seek the praise of men, as an end ; but it delights their hearts to know, that their services are acceptable to the multitude of their brethren. It cheers and encourages them, in their labours for the good of the community, to know, that they have the wishes, prayers, and cooperation of the virtuous.

Withhold not this encouragement, my brethren, to well doing, when it is in the power of your hearts and tongues to bestow it. It is impossible, in all cases, to reward the patriotick for their publick-spirited exertions. The Israelites were unable to repay the beneficence of Moses with any thing in their gift ; the least they could do, was to give him their gratitude and confidence. Who does not admire the self-denial and enterprise of Abraham, and what one of his descendants did not reflect on his faith, piety, and benevolence, with the highest degree of gratitude ? In every age of the world, those men are to be ranked among our greatest benefactors, who exert themselves to rear temples to the living and true God. We honour and love our parents, who brought us into the world, and nursed our infancy, and guided our childhood ; but those are our parents in the truest sense, who labour to create us anew in Christ Jesus ; who travail, as it were, in birth again, until Christ be formed within us, the hope of glory ; who indoctrinate us into the principles of the gospel, and mould us into the image of its blessed founder.



In this connexion, the leading members of this society, who have originated and carried into effect the rebuilding of the house of our God, are entitled to our grateful acknowledgments. May their successful efforts in this honourable design serve to unite us still more firmly in the faith and charity of the gospel ; and may the bond of peace, by which the members of this fraternity have been bound together, continue to be its joy and glory to the latest posterity.

To this end, my brethren, you will keep the object of your religious association always in view. You will seek the things, which make for peace, and things, whereby one may edify another. You will do well to remember, that no professions, however pompous, no ceremonies, however splendid, no offerings, however costly, will any wise atone for moral defects. You will never, I hope, imagine, that the presence of God consists in the number of your ministers, in the riches of their learning, or in the lustre of their talents. The presence of God is really and gloriously with you, when you practise virtue ; and the absence of virtue cannot be compensated by the building of the most gorgeous temples, and exhibitions of the warmest zeal.

It cannot be too deeply imprinted on our minds, that the means of virtue are not virtue itself. The contemplation of the Deity, whether in the closet or the church, is well, if that contemplation inspires the love and imitation of his moral attributes. The Deity is a being of perfect justice, truth, wisdom, order, and benevolence. The worship of such a being naturally fills the mind with the admiration of every moral excellence. The love of God is the love of truth ; and he, who professes





to be a servant of God, and, at the same time, disregards his oath, his promise, or his asseveration, is in fact a liar. The worship of God is reverence for perfect justice. He therefore, who worships God, and yet is guilty of fraud, is either ignorant of the nature of religion, or practises hypocrisy. The homage, which christians pay in publick to the Father of the universe, is a homage to benevolence ; for he, who made all things, is the lover and preserver of his creatures. He therefore, who worships God, and is, at the same time, malevolent and selfish, is either a stranger to religion, or mocks and contemns it. Let it then be clearly understood, that, in dedicating this temple to the most high God, we dedicate ourselves to the love, reverence, and practice of virtue. We hence consecrate the society to the veneration and culture of whatsoever things are just, true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

Forever sacred be this temple to the promotion of truth and righteousness ! Long after we, my brethren, shall have mingled our dust with the ashes of our fathers, may this vineyard of the Lord be fair and flourishing ! May her branches be beautiful, and out of her roots may there come forth many strong rods, who shall defend the truth of Jesus, and uphold the rights and liberties of the church universal. Peace be within her walls, and may faith and hope and charity be her constant guests ! For our brethren and companions' sake, we will now say, peace be within her ! As in times past, so in future, may the Highest himself establish her ; and of this ancient church may it long continue to be said, this and that man was born in her !

As for this house, which we have builded, let us remember, brethren, that it is henceforth none other, than



the house of God and the gate of heaven. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! We will here serve thee with gladness, we will come before thy presence with singing. We will open the gates of righteousness, we will go into them, and praise the Lord. For the services of our earthly temples are not only a figure, but a foretaste, of the worship of that temple above, which is eternal in the heavens. We cultivate in these scenes of local devotion, the same moral and intellectual powers, which we hope will be expanded and brightened, and forever exercised, in the celestial courts. Blessed be this day, which cometh unto us in the name of the Lord, and let the peace of God rest upon this house ! Always may it have the power to call off our views and affections from a world of sense and sin, and exalt them to a world of intellect and order ! Ever may it be a place, where the Father of all shall be worshipped in spirit and in truth ; a place of serious inquiry and religious improvement ; where the sympathy of kindred souls shall heighten the glow of devotion ; where the sweet communion of saints shall strengthen the piety, and cement the love of the brotherhood ; and where the sincerity and fervour of our prayers, and the spirituality and harmony of our hymns, shall form at least some faint resemblance to the worship of the general assembly and church of the first born in heaven.

It is there only, my brethren, where the presence of God affords fulness of joy, and where rivers of pleasure flow always at his right hand. Think not therefore to obtain permanent rest in this sublunary scene. Every thing within, around, above, below, is continually



saying to us, Arise ye and depart ; for this is not your rest. Heaven is the place of your happy destination. In that region of purity and peace there will be an everlasting end of cares and toils and pains ; and its blessed inhabitants are made pillars in the temple of God, and *go no more out.*

Ah ! when, my brethren, shall we constitute part of that glorious and happy convention ? They have no longer any use for real temples, and these servile forms. The presence of God is indeed with them, and in it there is abundance of rest for the weary soul. Theirs is in truth a satisfying peace, and a blessed tranquillity. Their glorified frames know no fatigue, and their perfected spirits no weariness. No sin assails the soul ; no enemy disturbs the joy ; no affliction imbitters the bliss, of the beatified saint. All is light and peace and felicity ; and their enlarged understandings, free from prejudices and errors and doubts, emulate the knowledge and improvements of holy angels.

Let us be virtuous, my brethren, and this presence of God, this rest, shall be ours. By a proper reverence of God's house and worship on the earth, we shall obtain a seat in the mansions of heaven. Which may God of his mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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